UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY
0 0002 7270 230

EX LIBRIS
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTÆNSIS

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
University of Alberta Libraries

https://archive.org/details/christmaschristm00crip_0

LA MADONNA DEL GRANDUCA

From the painting by Raphael in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence.

A work of the master's Florentine period, formerly in the grand-ducal palace. Painted and modelled with extraordinary delicacy, the simple female beauty and tender modesty of the Madonna are but thinly concealed by the religious character of the picture.

CHRISTMAS
AND CHRISTMAS LORE

BLACKIE & SON LIMITED
50 Old Bailey, LONDON
17 Stanhope Street, GLASGOW

BLACKIE & SON (INDIA) LIMITED
Warwick House, Fort Street, BOMBAY

BLACKIE & SON (CANADA) LIMITED
TORONTO

CHRISTMAS AND CHRISTMAS LORE

BY

T. G. CRIPPEN

BLACKIE & SON LIMITED
LONDON AND GLASGOW

First published 1923
Reprinted 1925, 1928, 1929, 1935

Printed in Great Britain by Blackie & Son, Ltd., Glasgow

UNIVERSITY OF

331

Preface

For above forty years I have been a diligent collector of history, tradition, legend, custom, or folklore, whether from familiar or unfamiliar sources, relating to the festival of the Holy Nativity. I have drawn freely on such well-known stores of out-of-the-way knowledge as Brand's *Popular Antiquities* with the additions of Ellis, Hone's *Every Day Book*, *Table Book*, and *Ancient Mysteries*, *The Popish Kingdom* of Naogeorgus (Kirchmeyer) as translated by Barnaby Googe, Chambers's *Book of Days*, Husk's *Songs of the Nativity*, Miles's *Christmas in Ritual and Tradition*, and *The Home of a Naturalist* by Edmundson and Saxby; also from various publications of the Percy, Shakspere, and Surtees Societies. Moreover, I have gathered copiously from scarce pamphlets of the 17th and 18th centuries, from old chapbooks, newspaper paragraphs, and magazine articles old and new, and from contact with rustics in several counties. I must also acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Donald A. Mackenzie, for several valuable suggestions. The fruits of my gathering are briefly summarized in the following pages, in the hope that they may conduce to that "joy and pious mirth" wherewith we ought, all of us, to commemorate the best and greatest Gift of God to man.

T. G. CRIPPEN.

103136

Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Origin of Christmas	2
Coincident Festivals	9
Names of Christmas	11
Use of Evergreens	12
Holly and Ivy	14
Laurel, Rosemary, Fir, etc.	18
Mistletoe	20
Placing and Removing Evergreens	25
Christmas Ghosts	28
Christmas Tales	31
Christmas Music—The Waits	35
Old Christmas Hymns	37
Christmas Carols	41
Origin of Carols	43
The Oldest English Carols	49
Legendary, Mystical, and Modern Carols	54
Use of Carols	61
Church Observances—Advent	65
Church Observances—Christmas Bells	67
Church Observances—Midnight Mass	70
Nativity Plays	73
The Præsepio	78
Cradle-rocking: The Posada, etc.	81
The Children's Christmas	84
Puritan Hostility to Christmas	87
Mumming	94

Page

Hodening, Schimmel, etc. - - - - - - - - 97
Wassailing - - - - - - - - - - - 99
Christmas Eve - - - - - - - - - - 104
The Yule Log - - - - - - - - - - 108
Christmas Candles - - - - - - - - - 114
The Christmas Feast - - - - - - - - 116
The Boar's Head - - - - - - - - - 126
Christmas Sports - - - - - - - - - 130
Masking - - - - - - - - - - - 134
The Lord of Misrule - - - - - - - - 135
Yule-firth: "Unthrifty Folk" - - - - - - 142
Christmas Gifts—Santa Claus, etc. - - - - - 143
The Christmas Sheaf - - - - - - - - 149
The Christmas Tree - - - - - - - - 150
The Christmas Ship - - - - - - - - 155
Christmas Boxes - - - - - - - - - 157
Christmas Cards, etc. - - - - - - - - 161
Family Reunions—The Children's Day - - - - 163
Miscellaneous Christmas Superstitions, etc. - - - 165
Yule-tide in Thule - - - - - - - - - 171
Subsidiary Festivals - - - - - - - - 175
New Year's Eve—Hagmena - - - - - - - 182
Old Christmas Eve: Wassailing Trees - - - - 188
Epiphany - - - - - - - - - - - 191
Twelfth Night - - - - - - - - - 196
Feast of Fools, or of The Ass - - - - - - 200
Plough Monday, etc. - - - - - - - - 203
Candlemas - - - - - - - - - - - 204
Epilogue - - - - - - - - - - - 209

Appendix: Addenda and Corrigenda - - - - 213
Index - - - - - - - - - - - - - 215

List of Plates

	Facing Page
La Madonna del Granduca - - - - *Frontispiece* *From the painting by Raphael*	
Cutting the Mistletoe in Druidical Days - - - - *From the painting by Henri Motte*	24
"God rest ye merry, gentlemen" - - - - - *From the painting by J. Seymour Lucas, R.A.*	64
After Midnight Mass, Fifteenth Century - - - *From the painting by G. H. Boughton, R.A.*	72
Bringing in the Yule Log, Penshurst Place, Kent - *After Joseph Nash*	112
Christmas Revels: Haddon Hall, Derbyshire - - - *After Joseph Nash*	136
The First Christmas Card (1846) - - - - - - *After a design by J. C. Horsley, R.A.*	160
The Wassailing of the Apple Trees - - - - - *From an old wood-cut*	184

CHRISTMAS AND CHRISTMAS LORE

1. INTRODUCTION

"Christmas!" Is there any other word in our whole English vocabulary that calls forth such a flood of joyous emotion as that which designates the Festival of Humanity—the day which we are accustomed to regard as "peculiarly the Home and Household Festival of England? Longed for as the season when our shining hearths, our domestic comforts, and our social felicity are the brightest under heaven; the chosen season of peace and goodwill, of family reunions, of happy visits, of friendly greetings, of interchange of gifts, of kindness to the poor, of mutual esteem and universal joy": the blending of sport, mirth, and laughter with Faith, Hope, and Charity, this is a real English Christmas. Within, the house is gay with holly and ivy, laurel and fir; the mistletoe hangs in the place of honour, shimmering with pearls that seem to have dropped from Freyja's necklace Brising; the Yule log blazes on the hearth; the Christmas-tree towers aloft in faery splendour; and the Christmas candles burn in homely remem-

brance of the Star of Bethlehem. Without, the sta look as brightly down on an expanse of snow, de and crisp and even, as once they looked upon tho holy fields where shepherds watched their flocks night. Borne upon the frosty air comes the mer chiming of Christmas bells, or mayhap the solen tolling of the knell of the Prince of Darkness. An mingling with the brazen music, we hear the sound youthful voices caroling " Joy to the world ", or " Ha the herald angels sing ", or, better still, that simple and dearest of all our old English carols (case-harden must be the heart that does not respond to it):

" God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay;
Remember, Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from Satan's power,
When we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy!"

2. ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS

Our topic is old Christmas customs and tradition and the difficulty is, where to begin? Perhaps it best to begin at the beginning and ask: " Where d Christmas come from?" Not from what secret rece did that hale and frosty giant emerge, with his jovi face and holly crown and steaming bowl, who smil upon us from ten thousand pictures, and whom w instinctively recognize as " Father Christmas "; b how did the fashion arise of celebrating the birthd of our Lord on the 25th of December, not on

:h religious observances but with feasting and lity? For there is no record, nor even any respect- e tradition, of the actual date of our Saviour's birth. Even the year is not absolutely certain. It is ierally agreed that the traditional date, A.U.C. 3[1], is too late; for St. Matthew distinctly affirms t " Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the ys of Herod the king ", and Herod died in A.U.C.). There must have been time, between the birth Jesus and the death of Herod, for the visit of the e men from the East, the retreat into Egypt, and Slaughter of the Innocents. The testimony of Luke is by no means as decisive as at first glance seems to be. For one thing, the real meaning of remark about the census (ch. ii, 2) is very doubt- . Then it is uncertain whether " the fifteenth ır of Tiberius Cæsar " (ch. iii, 1) is counted from .C. 765, when he was associated with Augustus the Empire, or from the death of Augustus in .C. 767. Then the phrase " about 30 years old ", ch. iii, 23, may mean anything from 29 to 31; so ıt Luke's indications of the year of the Nativity not more definite than " about A.U.C. 749 to 3 ". Nor does St. Matthew help us much by his ount of the Star, seen first in the East and then r Bethlehem. There is indeed no necessity to derstand this as denoting either a new star or such conjunction of two or more stars as would make m seem to coalesce; or a mere atmospheric meteor. ıe most likely meaning of " His Star " is some such estial phenomenon as, interpreted by astrological

[1] *Anno Urbis Conditæ 753* = the 753rd year from the building of the city, i.e. Rome.

rules, would indicate the birth in Judea of some
destined to greatness. Now there was a remarka
conjunction of two planets in May, again in Octob
and yet again in November, A.U.C. 747, which ast
logers would certainly think portended some gr
thing about to happen. We are nowhere told t
Jesus was born exactly at the time when the "sta
appeared; but it seems safe to conclude that I
birth was at some time between the middle of A.U
747 and the end of A.U.C. 749, i.e. 7 B.C. and 5 B

This agrees with a very ancient tradition that, wh
our Lord was born, the temple (more correctly *ga*
of Janus at Rome was shut, in token of peace throug
out the whole Roman dominion. Such an event h
only occurred twice before the reign of Augustus; b
it happened in A.U.C. 724, and again in A.U.C. 746, fr
which time the gate remained closed for several yea

"No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around;
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;
The hookèd chariot stood
Unstained with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by."

If the *year* of our Saviour's birth is thus open
question, the *day* is yet more uncertain. The days
His death and resurrection are clearly recorded
the Gospels, and, from the time of the Apostles un
now, the anniversary of His resurrection victory h
been almost universally observed. The birthday
the Church, too, the Day of Pentecost, was fixed

e Jewish Calendar, and from almost the earliest ages has been kept as a joyful Christian anniversary. ry early, too, it became usual to consecrate the New ar to Him in whom all things become new, by a tival which was designed to commemorate at once s manifestation, His baptism, and His first miracle. t not until the third century do we find any attempt fix with authority the day of His birth. There are leed vague traditions of a festival of the Nativity pt at Rome in the time of Bishop Telesphorus, tween A.D. 127 and 139; and some of the Christmas servances of the Roman Church are said to be of appointment. There is a story of a massacre of ristians in the catacombs on the day of the Nativity some unspecified year between A.D. 161 and 180; d a similar story of a massacre at Nicomedia in the gn of Diocletian, about A.D. 300; but all these ries are too vague, and the earliest mention of them late, to be at all reliable.

There was a common belief that the Nativity took ce on the 25th day of the month; but *which* month s quite uncertain, and there was scarcely a month the year to which some guesser did not assign it. ement of Alexandria (before 220) names five dates, three different months of the Egyptian year, to ich various persons assigned the Nativity; and e of these corresponds to the 25th December. here was, in the third century, a common belief t our Lord was born on the day of the winter stice. This does not seem to have rested on any cord or evidence worth the name, but on a fantastic erpretation of some prophetic scriptures; also on

a notion that the Annunciation and the Crucifix
were both on the same day of the year, viz. the 2
of March. The apocryphal book called *The Apost*
Constitutions, written probably towards the end
the third century, represents the Apostles as ordain
that the feast should be kept on the 25th day of
ninth month; by which, however, the context clea
shows that December is meant. The learned Jo
Selden, in his treatise in defence of the traditio
date (published posthumously in 1661), affirms t
in the early Christian ages the solstice was suppos
to fall on the 8th of the Kalends of January, that
the 25th December. This date, however, has
found universal acceptance. A document assigned
about A.D. 243 gives 28th March as the date of
Nativity; and several modern students infer, fr
the mention of "shepherds abiding in the fiel
and from arrangements presumed to have been nec
sary for the census, that it must have been some ti
between the end of July and the end of October.

Soon after the end of the last great persecuti
between A.D. 310 and 320, or as others say, about 3
the Church at Rome definitely fixed on the 25th Dece
ber as the birthday of the Lord; the "manifestation
i.e. the visit of the wise men from the East, be
celebrated twelve days later. For a couple of gene
tions the Eastern Church continued to make
Epiphany festival, on 6th January, include the c
memoration of the Holy Birth; but early in the f
century the Roman use became almost univers

[1] Traditions vary greatly as to the time when the Roman usage was generally acc
in the East. By one account it was the result of a consultation between Pope Julius
Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem about A.D. 352; others mention 375 for Antioch and 38

There was much to commend this selection of a
te. So long as heathenism was in full vigour the
cient Christians were puritanically jealous of any-
ng that might seem like coquetting with idolatry;
t, when heathenism was manifestly declining, there
s a disposition to adopt such of its usages as were
rmless and capable of a Christian interpretation.
d it is not easy to blame this disposition. As the
rist-Child coming into the world transfigured it,
that from the day of His advent it was the same
d yet not the same, so the old observances, when
sociated with the memory of His coming, were
imated with a new spirit; and what was heathenish
came rich with Christian symbolism. Now in
cember and the beginning of January there were
veral festivals which were intimately associated with
e daily life of the Roman people. First, from the
th to the 21st December, was the *Saturnalia*, the
eat Roman holiday in remembrance of the supposed
Golden Age ". One might call it the Feast of Topsy-
rveydom; when slaves were allowed for a few days
enjoy the semblance of freedom, were waited upon
their masters, and chose from among themselves a
ck king to preside over their revels. Next, on the
nd, came *Sigillaria*, the Feast of Dolls, when a fair
s held, and dolls and other toys, mostly of earthen-
re, were given to children. Then, on 25th, came
umalia, otherwise *Dies Natalis Invicti Solis*, The
rthday of the Unconquered Sun, when the days
gan to lengthen after the solstice. This was neither

salem; while yet another tradition ascribes the adoption of the western date at
salem to Bishop Juvenalis, about 431.

ancient nor very popular; it is believed to have b instituted as late as A.D. 270 or 273, by the Empe Aurelian, in honour of Mithras, the Persian Sun-g of which he was an ardent worshipper. It is wo mentioning here that, of all the new religions wh sprang up during the decline of the Roman Emp Mithraism was the purest in its morality, and only one which came into serious competition w Christianity. Finally came *Kalendæ Januarii*, the N Year's Day, when everybody gave gifts to everyb else (*Strenæ* they were called); connected with wh was *Juvenilia*, the special festival of Childhood Youth.

Surely it was well that all these should be co bined in one great Christian feast, and their anci significance transfigured in the light of the Gospel; that instead of the old *Saturnalia*, celebrating vague tradition of a Golden Age for ever past, feast should celebrate the sure and certain hope a Golden Age that shall never end. It should aff not a transient and mocking image of freedom, a pledge of that liberty wherewith the Truth ma free indeed. And so ere long all Latin-speaking Ch tendom was joyously singing:

> " O! the ever-blessed birthday,
> When the Virgin, full of grace,
> By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
> Bare the Saviour of our race;
> And the Child, the world's Redeemer,
> First displayed His sacred face:
> Evermore, and evermore."

3. COINCIDENT FESTIVALS

Now this newly established Christian festival coinded very nearly with several other festivals in different parts of the world, the spirit of which was ying out with the decay of the old religions. With any of these were associated customs the original eaning of which was already forgotten, and which rvived merely through instinctive conservatism. thers obtained a new lease of life, by virtue of a hristian significance imposed upon them. There as the Jewish *Hanuca*, the Feast of the Dedication; e anniversary, not of the dedicating of Solomon's mple, nor of the temple as restored by Zerubbabel, ıt of its rededication, after it had been polluted by ntiochus and recovered by the valour of the Maccaees. The Jews called it " The Feast of Lights ", ıd it was usual to burn great quantities of lamps ıd candles, as emblems of the Light of Truth, rendled after it had been awhile obscured by the eathen. The very name of it was transferred by the atin Church to the Feast of the Nativity. How elightfully would this New Feast of Lights remind ıe pious Israelite, who had learned to recognize the ope of Israel in the Child of Bethlehem, that the rkness was past, and the True Light was now shining.

In Egypt, and wherever Mithraism had gained a oting, the new festival would coincide—as it did Rome—with the birthday of the Sun-god. And ıe northern barbarians—Britons and Saxons and orsemen—would find it practically coincident with

their own Yule, the feast of the winter solstice a
of the returning sun. It seems to have been in pa
times, at least in Norway, the special festival of t
god Thor. In the *Heimskringla* we read that Ki
Hakon the Good " made a law that the festival
Yule should begin at the same time as Christi
people held it; and that every man, under penal
should brew a measure of malt into ale, and the
with keep the Yule holy as long as it lasted ". T
may or may not have been a desirable way of " kee
ing the Yule holy "; but it was a pagan festival, k
in the pagan way, with merriment and good ch
throughout the northern regions. Yule, be it remem
bered, was not a single feast-day, but the whole peri
of midwinter festivity, the special time of joy a
devotion to the Giver of fruitful seasons.[1] And th
to South, and East, and West, and North the re
venated Yule would speak of the Sun of Righteousne
arisen with healing in His wings.

It may be convenient to remark here that t
Roman Calendar, established by Julius Cæsar
A.U.C. 707 (46 B.C.), and retained in general use f
above 1600 years, assumed that the true length
the year was $365\frac{1}{4}$ days, and accordingly provided
" leap year " every fourth year. But closer observ
tion showed that this reckoning was inaccurate
the extent of about 3 days in 400 years. And in 15
Pope Gregory XIII ordained that ten days (5th
14th) should be omitted from the month of Octob

[1] There is some uncertainty as to the actual date of the northern midwinter festi
which *may* not have been held in all places at the same time. But however that may h
been, its surviving observances were transferred to the Christian feast, in Germany earl
the ninth century, and in Norway about the middle of the tenth.

that year, and that thenceforward three leap years ould be dropped in every 400 years. This correc- n was promptly adopted in all Roman Catholic untries, but elsewhere it was long rejected as papistical". It was only accepted by German, utch, and Swiss Protestants about 1700, and was t legalized in the British dominions till 1752. In ny places it was slowly and reluctantly accepted; d for three or four generations January 5th (after oo, January 6th) was persistently observed as "Old ristmas Day". Moreover, the Reformed Calendar, w universal in the West, has never been adopted the Greek and other Eastern Churches. Accord- gly ecclesiastical seasons in Greece, Serbia, Russia, ., are dated "Old Style", so that the Eastern ristmas coincides approximately with the Western piphany.

4. NAMES OF CHRISTMAS

Something should here be said of the names by ich the Birthday Feast was distinguished. In Rome, d throughout the greater part of Latin Christendom, was "The Feast of the Nativity"; and in Greece *enethlia*, having the same meaning. The French *oël* is variously explained: some derive it, through e Provençal *Nadal*, from the Latin *Natalis*, with ich the Italian *Natale* and the Welsh *Nadolig* robably also the Gaelic *Nollaig*) are compared; hers trace it through the form *Nowell* to *Nouvelles*, . news. Possibly both may be right; Noël and Nowell ay be words of distinct origin, which, being almost entical in sound, have come to be identified in

meaning. Another Italian name is *Nativita*, whi is evidently the parent of the Spanish *Navidad*. T German *Weihnacht* signifies " the holy or consecra night ", though some irreverent etymologists ha punningly derived it from *Wein-nacht*, i.e. wine nig as if it were only a season of Bacchanalian jolli " Yule " is, beyond all question, the transferred na of a heathen festival, and may be connected wi *Iol*, a wheel, with reference to the turn of the seaso Our own " Christmas " is formed on the same patte as Michaelmas, Martinmas, Childermas, Candlem &c.; but opinions differ widely as to the origin a meaning of the syllable *-mas*. Perhaps the likeli derivation is from the Hebrew *mas*, meaning " t bute " or " offering " (see *Deut.* ch. xvi, 10); when " mass ", French *messe*, Latin *missa*, applied in t unreformed Church to the principal service of t day, to which all others were subordinate.

5. USE OF EVERGREENS

The Feast of the Holy Nativity, as we have see rather incorporated than supplanted various heath festivals; it was therefore only natural that relics heathen practice should survive as traditional Chris mas customs. A well-known letter of Pope Gregory to Augustine of Canterbury advises him to perm and even encourage, such harmless popular custo as were capable of a Christian interpretation. O

[1] M. Court de Gibelin, in his *Allégories Orientales*, printed at Paris in 1773, is profus his learning on the derivation of this word. " Iol (he says), pronounced Hiol, Iul, Jul, G Hweol, Wheel Wiel, Vol &c., is a primitive word, carrying with it the general ide Revolution;" and he refers to variants in French, English, Flemish, German, Danish, La Arabic, and Persian. He might have added Anglo-Saxon and Cornish.

the oldest of these, which nowadays seems the st distinctly English of them all, is the decking houses and churches with evergreens. This was stomary at the Roman Saturnalia, and also, by ne accounts, among the northern peoples at their dwinter feast. Its origin is lost in the mazes of tiquity; perhaps the likeliest of many wild contures is that it was an offer of winter hospitality the spirits and fairies that were supposed to haunt e leafless woods. Accordingly the custom was that, erever else the evergreens might be placed, a spray berried holly should always appear in the window. ne of the earliest Christian references to the practice by Tertullian (A.D. 200–20). In his treatise on olatry he strongly denounces it: "Let those who ve no light, light their lamps daily; let them over om hell fire is imminent affix to their posts laurels omed presently to burn; to them the testimonies darkness and the omens of their penalties are suitle. You are a light of the world, a tree ever green; you have renounced temples, make not your own e a temple." Considering that Tertullian was one those fanatics who positively courted persecution, s seems to favour a statement that has been made no very good authority, that in a time of persecun Christians were detected by their not adorning ir houses at Saturnalia or Kalendæ; and that afterrds they fell back on the heathen custom, ostensibly honour of the Nativity, but really as a measure of f-defence. However this may have been, the prace was early discouraged by the Church, and to this y in Italy it is little followed. In France it never

had any great popularity; and in Spain it was f
bidden by a Church council in the sixth centur
But in England and Germany it has been alm
universal; we can trace it back to a very rem
Christian antiquity; and at least 500 years ago
religious meaning was read into the trees whose foli
was chiefly employed.

6. HOLLY AND IVY

Of these plants it was early remembered that
had been the badge of the Wine-god, Bacchus; and
was therefore usually banished to the outside of t
house, which the holly, bay, yew, and fir adorn
within. Many old songs tell of rivalry between t
holly and the ivy: here is one which must be as
as the fifteenth century:

" Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be, ywis,
Holly hath the mastery as the manner is.
Holly standeth in the hall fair to behold;
Ivy stands without the door, she is full sore a-cold.
Holly and his merry men they dance and sing,
Ivy and her maidens weep, and hands wring.
Ivy hath a kybe, she caught it with the cold,
So may they all have that with ivy hold.
Holly hath berries as red as any rose,
The foresters, the hunters, keep them for the doos.
Ivy hath berries as black as any sloe,
There comes the owl, and eat them as she go.
Holly hath of birds a full fair flock,
The nightingale, the popinjay, the gentle laverock.

[1] Second Council of Braga, A.D. 572 (can. 73). The prohibition applied to the Kale
and all other times when such decorations were used by the heathen.

Ivy, what birds hast thou?
None but the owlet that cries ' how, how '."

re were some, however, who thought of the feeble clinging to its needful support as a lively emblem uman feebleness clinging to divine strength. Some thought may have been in the mind of the old strel who sang:

" Ivy, chief of trees it is,
The most worthy in all the town.
He that saith other doth amiss;
Worthy is she to bear the crown.
Ivy is soft and meek of speech,
Against all bale she is bliss:
Well is he that may her reach:
Veni, coronaberis."

in the minds of not a few the sombre foliage of ivy was associated with thoughts of the grave. best-known of all ivy songs is that which tells

" Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the ivy green ".

en this thought is predominant, it is only reason- that the symbol of mortality should be thrust from the house, where all the inward adornments joyously of His advent Who " abolished death, brought life and immortality to light ".

As the ivy was the coronal worn by the heathen honour of Bacchus, so the *holly*, with its sharp kles and blood-red berries, was thought to image h the Saviour's crown of thorns. This thought

peeps forth from another old English Holly S

" The holly and the ivy, now they are both well grown;
Of all the trees that are in the wood the holly bears the cr
The holly bears a blossom as white as lily flower;
And Mary, she bore Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
The holly bears a berry as red as any blood;
And Mary, she bore Jesus Christ to do poor sinners goo
The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall;
And Mary, she bore Jesus Christ for to redeem us all.
The holly bears a prickle as sharp as any thorn;
And Mary, she bore Jesus Christ on Christmas in the m

Holly, it was generally believed, was pecul hateful to witches. In the west of England it said that a maiden should adorn her bed with a s of berried holly on Christmas Eve; otherwise might receive an unwelcome visit from some chievous goblin. In Germany a sprig of church h that is, one which had actually been used in ch decoration, was regarded as a charm against lightn In Cornwall it was thought to ensure good luc the year to its possessor. In the English Midl the joke was—perhaps still is—that according as holly or she holly ", i.e. that with prickly or sm leaves, is first brought into the house on Chris Eve, the master or mistress will rule throughou ensuing year. But usually in Yule-tide folk-song is male and ivy female, as in the carol quoted a In another, of the fifteenth century, holly and contend for mastery thus:

" Then spoke holly, ' I am fierce and jolly,
I will have the mastery in landès where we go.'

Then spake ivy, ' I am loud and proud,
I will have the mastery in landès where we go.' "

text is a little uncertain; the latest editor reads am lou'd and prou'd ", i.e. " loved and proved ", ch certainly seems best to suit the context; for he final stanza holly kneels in token of submission. Akin to this is a superstition that holly affords ection or brings good luck to the men of the sehold, and ivy to the women.

In this connection it may be worth while to quote lly and ivy song from a MS. in the British Museum dl. 31922), which is ascribed to King Henry VIII, was almost certainly set to music by him:

" As the holly groweth green
And never changeth hue,
So am I, ever hath been,
To my lady true.

" As the holly groweth green
With ivy all alone,
When flowers cannot be seen,
And greenwood leaves be gone:

" Now unto my lady
Promise to her I make,
From all other only
To her I me betake."

would be interesting to know to which of his six es this ditty was addressed.

7. LAUREL, ROSEMARY, FIR, ETC.

Of the other evergreens used for Christmas ado ment the *laurel* or *bay*, the emblem of triumph, a symbolized the triumph of Humanity as represen by the Son of Man. In Friesland a carol is sung men impersonating the wise men from the East which every line has for a burden the word " laure A part of it is thus translated:

> " We come walking with our staves
> Wreathed with laurel:
> We seek the King Jesus, Him that saves,
> To bring Him laurel, &c."

As the bay tree, the true laurel of the Ancients rather scarce in England, the common cherry la is generally made to do duty for it; sometimes Portugal laurel, Aucuba, &c. These are mere s stitutes, and have no symbolism.[1]

Rosemary was thought to be extremely offen to evil spirits, and therefore naturally appropriate the advent of their Conqueror. There seems also have been in the popular mind a fanciful associat between the name of the shrub and that of the Ble Virgin. This seems the most convenient place mention a custom which obtained at Ripon in latter part of the eighteenth century. The choir b of the collegiate church brought in baskets of apples, in each of which a sprig of rosemary

[1] Box, which is sometimes found among the Christmas evergreens, has no seas significance. Indeed, if the witness of Herrick may be relied on, its decorative use wa thought legitimate from Candlemas to Easter Eve.

ck. One of these apples was offered to every mem- of the congregation, in return for which a small ment of twopence, fourpence, or sixpence was ected.

Yew and *cypress*, notwithstanding their funereal ociations, appeared from their exceeding durability emblems of that eternal life which is the portion those who entertain the Christ-Child, not in the use, but in the heart. And the sweet-smelling *fir* orded a kind of natural incense in honour of the arnate Deity. Perhaps this thought had to do h the choice of fir as specially suited for church rnment. So A. Cleveland Coxe sings:

" I know, I know
Where the green leaves grow,
When the woods without are bare;
Where a sweet perfume
Of the woodland's bloom
Is afloat on the winter's air:
When tempest strong
Has howled along
With his war whoop wild and loud,
Till the broad ribs broke
Of the forest oak,
And his crown of glory bowed.

" I know, I know
Where the green leaves grow,
Though the groves without are bare;
Where the branches nod
Of the trees of God,
And the wild vines flourish fair.
For a fragrant crown
When the Lord comes down

Of the deathless green we braid
O'er the altar bright,
Where the tissue white
Like the winter's snow is laid.

"And we think it meet
Our Lord to greet,
As the wise men did of old,
With the spiceries
Of incense trees,
And hearts like hoarded gold.
And so we shake
The snowy flake
From cedar and myrtle fair,
And the boughs that nod
On the hills of God
We raise to His glory there."

8. MISTLETOE

And what about the *mistletoe*, which we are apt regard as the crown of all? Readers of Virgil v remember it as the Golden Bough, by plucking which Æneas is enabled to descend into hell, a come safely back. The Druids, as is well knov held it sacred, called it "all-heal", and ascribed it all sorts of miraculous virtues. It was not only specific for every disease, but an antidote to ev kind of poison. It rendered cattle prolific; and who bore it was safe from all witchcraft, was able see ghosts, and to make them speak. This was es cially the case if, as rarely happened, it was fou growing on an oak tree; it was then solemnly con crated by a sacrifice of white oxen, and cut from

ent stem by the Arch Druid with a golden knife, cial care being taken that it should by no means ch the ground. Ladies, please remember, when . Somebody claims the privilege of the mistletoe, as not its proper virtue unless it was cut with a den knife: also, that the extent of the said privi- e is measured by the number of its berries, one which is to be plucked off at every kiss. There s an old jest that "the maid who is not kissed ler the mistletoe at Christmas will not be married t year".

This custom of kissing under the mistletoe seems be peculiarly English, and no reliable explanation its origin seems to be forthcoming. It is not un- ly, however, that it may be a survival from a ndinavian custom of pre-Christian antiquity. The tletoe was deemed so sacred that if enemies met ually beneath it in the forest they laid down their s and maintained a truce till the following day. ence grew a practice of hanging mistletoe over doorway, the entering by which was understood imply a pledge of peace and friendship, to be sealed h a friendly greeting. It was, moreover, an invita- n to the spirits of the forest, "who would come in riendly way in the long winter night, bringing good er" and security against any possible jealousy of gods. Others say that the kiss under the mistletoe a relic of some primitive marriage rite. The cere- nial cutting of mistletoe for medicinal (or more rectly magical) purposes was practised at mid- mmer. It was thought of as a spirit or god of vege- ion in the tree, which could not—or ought not to—

be cut down until the mistletoe was culled. How when the midsummer rite was transferred to Yu tide does not appear. In Shropshire the mistletoe associated with the New Year rather than with t Nativity.

Probably because of its Druidical associations, t mistletoe has usually been disallowed in church de rations. There was one remarkable exception. York Minster it was long customary for a priest ce moniously to lay a large bunch of it on the altar. T may possibly have been a survival of some pre-Christ usage; or it may have been a symbol borrowed fr the Neo-Druidism of the twelfth century; accord to which the mistletoe, dependent on the tree, rep sented the dependence of man on God. In that c the laying of the plant on the altar might symbo man, or humanity as expressed in the Incarnate S becoming an offering acceptable to God. But ind of all our evergreens there is none richer than t in Christian symbolism. Its medicinal propert whether real or imaginary, make it a fitting repres tative of that Tree of Life, the leaves of which for the healing of the nations; while its mysteri parasitical growth led to its adoption as a lively e blem of the Virgin Birth.

But a still more beautiful symbolism comes to from the old Norse mythology. Balder, the god the summer sun, cannot be hurt by anything on earth or under the earth. But he is hated by the fi Loki, who notes that the mistletoe grows neither the earth nor under the earth, but on a tree. By craft, therefore, Hœder, " the blind old god wh

t are shod with silence ", slays Balder with a spear ped with mistletoe. When all things in earth and ven have wept for Balder, he is restored to life Freyja, the goddess of love; whose tears become pearls of the necklace Brising, or by another sion of the legend the pearly berries of the fateful nt. Therefore it was decreed that the mistletoe uld be sacred to Freyja so long as it was neither the earth nor under the earth, for which cause it st always hang on high.[1]

What could be more natural than to adopt the rit of this old fable from a Christian point of view, d to accept the mistletoe as the emblem of that ve which is stronger than death, and to give it place of honour on that night when " Mercy and uth met together, Righteousness and Peace kissed h other ". And why should the Mistletoe Bough so constantly associated with that gruesome legend the Old Oak Chest? Surely its proper significance the victory of love over death, not that of death er love. The weird melody to which the unseason- e story is usually sung—not so very old after all— come to be a regular element in our Christmas nstrelsy; why should we not sing it to something e this?

The mistletoe bough, in the olden time,
Was honoured in many a sacred rhyme
By bards and singers of high degree,
When cut from its place on the old oak tree
By white-robed Druid with golden knife;
For they thought it a magical Tree of Life:

[1] Several students of folk-lore maintain that the legend of Balder is of late origin; and some even found in it traces of Christian influence.

And many a promise and holy vow
Was solemnly sworn on the mistletoe bough.

The mistletoe bough in the Norseman's lay
Told ever of horror, and love's dismay,
When the old blind god, by a sportive blow,
Laid Balder, the beautiful sun-god, low;
Thenceforth it was deemed an accursed thing;
But Love out of sorrow could victory bring,
And the tears of Freyja are shining now,
Like orient pearls, on the mistletoe bough.

The mistletoe bough on the festive throng
Looks down, amid echoes of mirthful song,
Where hearts make music as old friends meet,
Whose pulse keeps time to the dancers' feet,
And eyes are brighter with looks of love
Than gems outshining the lamps above:
And who is she that will not allow
A kiss, claimed under the mistletoe bough?

The mistletoe bough at our Christmas board
Shall hang, to the honour of Christ our Lord:
For He is the evergreen Tree of Life,
Whom the old blind world, amid hate and strife,
Rejected and slew; but He soared above,
Alive from the dead, in the power of Love:
And Mercy and Truth are assembling now,
With Justice and Peace, at the mistletoe bough.

In Yorkshire and Derbyshire, where mistletoe is sca
a substitute is (or was) provided in the shape of t
crossed hoops covered with greenery, and ador
with ribbons and oranges or bright-coloured app
Sometimes three small dolls were arranged in
middle to represent the Holy Family. This was s

ıded in the place of honour, and served all the poses of the orthodox " kissing-bush ". It has n suggested that the " mistletoe of the oak ", to ich such marvellous virtues were ascribed, was not familiar *Viscum album* with greenish-white flowers, ich grows freely on apple trees, and occasionally on)lars, willows, and hawthorns, but very rarely on s, but the closely related *Loranthus Europæus*, with flowers, which is usually found parasitical on an , but is not native in England. Wherever either these plants is found it is associated with similar erstitions, even as far to the east as Kamschatka l among the Ainu in Japan.

9. PLACING AND REMOVING EVERGREENS

Tradition prescribed Christmas Eve as the proper e for placing the festive evergreens; and in Rutland vas thought unlucky to bring holly into the house ore that time. A likely explanation of this may be t, in popular belief, the wood-spirits were tricksy, might do mischief if they were invited into the ise before the Christ-Child could hold them in raint by His mystical presence. On this topic re will be said hereafter.

Stow tells us, in his *Survey of London* (1598), that nerly not only houses and churches, but " the duits and standards in the streets were likewise nished; among the which I read that, in the year 4, by tempest of thunder and lightning, towards morning of Candlemas Day, at the Leadenhall,

in Cornhill, a standard of tree, being set up in midst of the pavement, fast in the ground, nai full of holm and ivie, for disport of Christmas to people, was torne up and cast downe by the malign spirit (as was thought), and the stones of the pavem all about were cast in the streets, and into div houses, so that the people were sore aghast ".

The mode of arranging the decorative evergree both in house and church, must always have var with individual taste. A humorous account of w seems to have been fashionable about 1712 appe in the *Spectator* of 23rd January in that year. " (clerk, who was once a gardener, has this Christ so overdeckt the church with greens that he has q spoilt my prospect. . . . The middle aisle is a v pretty shady walk, and the pews look like so m arbours on each side of it. The pulpit itself has s clusters of Ivy, Holly, and Rosemary about it t a light fellow in our pew took occasion to say t the congregation heard the Word out of a bush, Moses." About that time it was customary in Lon for evergreens to be hawked through the streets. Gay's poem " Trivia " (1713) we read:

> " When rosemary and bays, the poet's crown,
> Are bawled in frequent cries through all the town,
> Then judge the festival of Christmas near—
> Christmas, the joyous period of the year.
> Now with bright holly all the temples strow,
> With laurel green and sacred mistletoe."

It is now usual for decorations to follow, as far as r be, the architectural lines of the building.

As to the removal of the greenery, custom was not orm. Some thought that as the Christmas holidays ed with Twelfth Night, or at the latest with Plough nday, the decorations ought to remain no longer. ers regarded the festal season as lasting till Candle-, the fortieth day after Christmas; when, according he law of Moses, the Mother of our Lord presented n in the Temple together with her thank-offering, Simeon recognized the Holy Child as the long-ited " Light to lighten the Gentiles ". This latter ns to have been the more general English custom, e may accept the witness of Herrick, who, under title " Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve ", writes:

" Down with the Rosemary, and so
Down with the Bays and Mistletoe;
Down with the Holly, Ivy, all
Wherewith ye dressed the Christmas hall;
That so the superstitious find
Not one least branch there left behind.
For look, how many leaves there be
Neglected there, maids, trust to me,
So many goblins ye shall see."

nany places it was a rule that the Christmas ever-ens, when taken down, should be left to perish by ural decay; to burn them was very unlucky. In opshire, on the other hand, the tradition was that should be burnt on Candlemas Eve.

10. CHRISTMAS GHOSTS

The mention of goblins reminds us that in m places the " Twelve Days " of Christmas were deer a peculiarly uncanny time; when witches, gho fairies, and the like, were apt to be abroad on vari mischief-making errands. This unpleasant super tion may have had a dual origin. In the howlin the winds and raging storms amid the winter's da ness, men thought they heard the voices of sup natural beings, who were probably malignant. A the spread of Christianity, such as it was, among rude northern peoples, brought in its train the adopt of the Roman Calendar. Thus the superstitions as ciated with the end of the Old and beginning of New Year would gradually be transferred from H low-e'en—the Celtic New Year's Eve, and the co sponding Scandinavian date—which fell near ab Martinmas, to Christmas and the Kalends of Janu So it came about that in Germany and the Slav countries Christmas Eve was deemed a favour time for auguries, as Hallow-e'en was in Scotl within living memory. As to those mysterious bei whose voices were heard in the winter's storms, t were very diversely conceived of, though always objects of dread. They were " The Wild Hun or " The Raging Host ", or " Gabriel's Hound or " The Devil and his Dandy Dogs ". They w the souls of those who had died by violence, or baptized, or under a curse; and Odin, attended the Valkyries, was their leader. In other places t

ancestral ghosts, the family dead revisiting the homestead; and in some of the Scandinavian ntries it was usual, in this belief, to have a meal ad for the ghosts on Christmas Eve, and to leave beds for their enjoyment, while the family slept he straw. In Sweden, and also in Poland, it was ıl before supper on Christmas Eve to scatter hay straw on the floor or on the table—obviously a norial of the Stable at Bethlehem. But some ropologists, who would derive all religious obser-es from a supposed primitive animism, suggest the custom was designed to establish or confirm ndly relations with the Corn Spirit, and thus ensure ntiful harvest. In other parts of the north witches trolls were thought to ride about on bears, were-es, or broomsticks, so that it was dangerous to be alone. One version of the story was that the trolls, were on their way to Rastekais, a mysterious ce within the mountain, where they would hold val for the disappearance of the sun. In Ger-y the leader of the Host was a woman, called by rent names in different places, who was attended logs, and who in various ways punished the lazy, sometimes rewarded the industrious. This re-ds one of Milton's " lubber-fiend ", the English obin Goodfellow ". In France it was thought that n was exceptionally busy on Christmas Eve, trying mpt worshippers on their way to church. He sent hes and warlocks, hobgoblins and ghosts, especi-the ghosts of suicides, to roam around farmyards lurk near cattle-sheds. Therefore on Christmas all doors of stables, cow-houses, and sheep-pens

were securely fastened, and no woman was allowed
enter them on any account. Oxen and asses w
indeed secure from harm; but horses were especi
exposed to the mischievous attentions of " Le Folle
the French equivalent of Puck.

The immunity of oxen and asses from the at
of malignant spirits is, no doubt, related to the leg
of the ox and ass as attendants at the Holy Nativ
Universally popular as this legend is, it has no foun
tion in the New Testament, nor in any ecclesiast
writer earlier than the year 400. It seems to be ba
on a strange mistranslation or misreading in the G
version of *Habakkuk*, ch. iii, 2, where, instead of
the midst of the years make (it) known ", we r
" Between two beasts Thou art made known ".
Hebrew the two phrases are so similar in appear
that, if badly written, one might easily be mistaken
the other. Now in *Isaiah*, ch. i, 3, we read, " The
knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's cri
and with this the misread passage about the "
beasts " has been associated. And so in an apocry
gospel of the fifth century we read, " The most ble
Mary went forth out of the cave, and, entering a sta
placed the Child in the stall, . . . and the ox and
ass, having Him in their midst, incessantly ad
Him ". [*Pseudo-Matthew*, ch. xiv.] A literal f
ment was thus invented for an imaginary predic
but it is with real regret that we give up the
dition which tells that

> " Ox and ass before Him bow;
> And He is in the manger now."

In Poland and Livonia the unseen terrors of Christ-
s Eve were werewolves and vampires. In Greece
y were " the Kallikantzaroi ", hideous monsters
m the underworld, half-human, half-bestial, who
at about by night doing all kinds of wanton mis-
ef, and were not completely exorcized until Epi-
any, when the priest sprinkled the house with holy
er. It is evident that in all this there is very little
pure heathenism.

11. CHRISTMAS TALES

Notwithstanding these imaginary terrors, Christmas
long been accounted, in England at least, the most
ing season for ghost stories. Why this should be
case is a question that leads us into another inter-
ng region of folk-lore. The proverb " Talk of the
il and he'll appear " embodies what was once an
blished article of belief; that to talk of malignant
ngs was to invite their approach, and perhaps give
m power to do mischief. Yet there has always
n a hankering to hear what might be told or dreamed
ut " the night side of nature "; and perhaps the
sibility of danger may have whetted the edge of
iosity. It seems usually to have done so, from the
s of Eve and the Serpent to those of Bluebeard and
ima. But it was felt that the powers of darkness
st be helpless in the presence of the Christ-Child.
reover in the Middle Ages, and far back into the
ts of Christian antiquity, there was an idea that
events commemorated in the great Christian anni-
saries were mystically repeated at those holy seasons.

So the Saviour was thought of as actually born
Christmas, manifested to the nations at Twelfth-ti
presented in the temple at Candlemas, fasting
tempted in Lent, triumphing on Palm Sunday, cr
fied on Good Friday, rising from the dead on Ea
Sunday, ascending to heaven on Holy Thursday, se
ing down the Spirit at Pentecost: not literally,
course, but mystically, in such wise that the g
and power of those His saving deeds were speci
localized, so to speak, in the corresponding anni
saries.

When we put these two beautifully poetic thou
together, we understand somewhat of the fitness
Christmas-tide for conversation about the shadowy
of the universe of being. At other times there m
be danger in talking too familiarly of " fiends, gh
and sprites that haunt the nights "; but at Christ
the power of malignant spirits was so neutralized
the mystical presence of the Christ-Child that curi
respecting them might be safely indulged. It is to
that Shakespeare alludes where he tells us that:

> " Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
> Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
> The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
> And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad;
> The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
> No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
> So hallowed and so gracious is the time."

Another tradition, which may well be counted
Christmas tale, has to do with the gods of heathen
The early Christians had no doubt of their real
tence, not as gods, but as evil demons; and even ea

n the first clear mention of Christmas we find a espread belief that at the Advent of the Saviour e was a general collapse of the infernal dynasty. vas said that the demons whom the heathen had shipped as gods were then revealed in their true racter, and the oracles which they formerly in- ed became silent. Whether these oracles were in cases pure imposture, or whether belief in them grounded on obscure facts analogous to the ged phenomena of modern spiritualism, is a ques- about which it seems prudent to be less dog- ic than were the men of the last generation. But vever this may be, in Egypt, Greece, Italy, and where, the oracles had been accepted with un- stioning faith from time immemorial. In the age the Cæsars they began to be regarded with some ree of scepticism; while the Christians generally ught of them as real, but of diabolical origin. is opinion, together with a belief that they became esponsive at the birth of Christ, survived until te recent times. The words of Milton on this ic are well known:

" The Oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathèd spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.
. . . . . .
" Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,

With that twice-battered god of Palestine;
And moonèd Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine:
The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn;
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mou

"And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

"Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud;
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest Hell can be his shroud;
In vain, with timbreled anthems dark,
The sable-stolèd sorcerers bear his worshiped ark.

"He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand;
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Nor Typhon huge, ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to shew his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damnèd crew."

All these are tales of the olden time. But ther
another class of Christmas tales which cannot

ether ignored. For many years past almost every ılar serial has honoured the festal season by a ıristmas number", consisting for the most part easonable fiction. A very large proportion of e tales are of reconciliation of estranged kinsfolk, gnition of long-parted friends, return of errant or daughters, forgiveness of injuries, enmity sub- l by the return of good for evil, or greed and shness expelled from the heart by the hallowed ıories of the time. Some few of these, like the ortal *Christmas Carol* of Dickens, have a per- ent place in literature; but most of them are too ıly written to pattern, and are sadly lacking in inality. Nevertheless, the motive is usually com- dable, and the feeblest of them are generally nct with the true spirit of Christmas.

12. CHRISTMAS MUSIC—THE WAITS

From Christmas Tales the transition is natural to istmas Music; and first of the Waits. But let not honourable title be abused by applying it to ıry Willie and others of the professionally unem- ved, who make hideous the long December nights ı wheezy clarionets, asthmatic trombones, and les that sound as if their catguts were tormented ı the colic. The best things become the worst in r degradation and abuse; and these nocturnal rors are a counterfeit, or a degenerate survival, of ancient institution which one would rejoice to see ored to its pristine dignity.

There is some doubt as to the origin of the name

of " Waits ". Some derive it from " wayte ", sai
be the ancient name of a musical instrument
called oboe or hautboy. Others say the term origi
had nothing to do with music, but merely desig
the Town Watchmen. By the beginning of the
teenth century these had, in some places, becom
Town Musicians, to whom the term " the Waits
applied in *The Tatler*. Until about the year
there were in the cities of London and Westmi
companies of " Waits ", whose leaders held offic
virtue of some kind of public appointment, and
claimed an exclusive right to solicit contributions
the public.

On the whole, the word seems most natural
refer to watching and waiting, and may remin
that of old Christmas began in the evening; "
evening and the morning (not the morning an
evening) were the first day ". And when the bea
thought was cherished of a mystical reiteration o
Holy Nativity at every Christmas-tide, the night
ushered in the happy Birthday was a Vigil, or W
night. Who would care to sleep, if perchance he
hear, as did the shepherds of Bethlehem, the h
angels proclaiming the Advent of " a Saviour, v
is Christ the Lord "? We may not hear that hea
music, but we may welcome the jubilant " Glo
excelsis " of Mozart, rendered with true artistic fe
by a well-practised band; or the solemn strain
come, all ye faithful " pealing across the snow.
does not love to hear a choir of youthful voices ca
the blithe old macaronic " Good Christian me
joice ", or the sweet minor melody of " The

nes bright "? Or who that has spent a Christmas Lancashire or Yorkshire has not pleasant memories the ever-welcome chorale:

> " Christians, awake, salute the happy morn
> Wherein the Saviour of the world was born."

13. OLD CHRISTMAS HYMNS

Within the century which saw the Christmas anni-sary fully established, two great Christian poets vied h each other in producing *hymns* for its due cele-tion. First in order of time was Ambrose, the ve bishop of Milan, who so reluctantly accepted office to which he was called by popular acclama-n, but who, when once he was installed therein, owed that he feared not the face of man by repelling great Emperor Theodosius from the Lord's Table til he showed penitence for innocent blood which his anger he had caused to be shed. The Christmas mn of St. Ambrose, " Veni Redemptor gentium " Redeemer of the nations, come "), is to be found a few recent hymn-books of the " High-church " pe, but it is not suited to modern taste. Better own, and far better adapted for social worship, is hymn of his great contemporary Prudentius, be-ning " Corde natus ex Parentis " (in English " Of Father's love begotten "); this has found accept-ce, with its fine mediæval tune, among all schools religious thought except Unitarians. These two, obably the first Christmas hymns ever written, were rt of the ancient heritage of the English Church; d, with many other good things, were discarded at

the Reformation, not because they were unworthy be retained, but because King Henry's new bish could not find anybody capable of translating th into decent singable English. They are still used the original Latin in the Church of Rome; as are t other fine Christmas hymns, " A solis ortus cardin (" From lands that see the sun arise "), by Seduli said to have been an Irishman; and " Jesu Redemp omnium " (" Jesus, Redeemer of us all "), of uncert origin, but probably of equal antiquity. But notwi standing the habitual use of these hymns in the Ro Church for nearly 1500 years, none of them, exc that of Prudentius, can be said to have become popu The reason is that they are too theological; they orthodox divinity in metre, hymns for students or the clergy rather than for the people. The sam true of all, or nearly all, the Christmas hymns earlier date than the twelfth or thirteenth cent Such is the fine hymn of Venantius Fortuna " Agnoscat omne sæculum " (" Let every age nation own "), which was regularly used at Y before the Reformation. It is true of a hymn of great schoolman Abelard, and of another by his g antagonist Bernard. No one who sings Berna immortal " Jesus, the very thought of Thee " think that its author was lacking in devout emot but when he tried to write a Christmas hymn he produced a rhyming tract on the prophecies that fulfilled in the Incarnation, ending with a rebuk the Jews for not understanding them.

It was just the same in the East. The first h that is sung at the Christmas morning service in

ek Church was written by Cosmas of Jerusalem, o died about A.D. 760. It is to my mind very beau-l, but it could never be popular except in the ege or the cloister. Here it is, as translated by J. M. Neale:

" Christ is born, tell forth His fame!
Christ from heaven, His love proclaim:
Christ on earth, exalt His name.
Sing to the Lord, O world, with exultation;
Break forth in glad thanksgiving, every nation.
For He hath triumphed gloriously!

" Man, in God's own image made,
Man, by Satan's wiles betrayed,
Man, on whom corruption preyed,
Shut out from hope of life and of salvation;
To-day Christ maketh him a new creation,
For He hath triumphed gloriously.

" For the Maker, when the foe
Wrought His creature death and woe,
Bowed the heavens, and came below;
And, in the virgin's womb His dwelling making,
Became True Man, our very nature taking,
For He hath triumphed gloriously.

" He, the Wisdom, Word, and Might,
God, and Son, and Light of Light,
Undiscovered by the sight
Of earthly monarch, or infernal spirit,
Incarnate was, that we might heaven inherit;
For He hath triumphed gloriously."

these hymns are theological; if they mention the *idents* of the Holy Nativity it is only to emphasize wonder of the divine condescension; there is

absolutely nothing of the homely sentiment of
modern Christmas verse. In a word, they are hy
of the cloister, not of the home.

And this, indeed, is all of a piece with the Christol
of the early and middle ages; alike in hymn, and serm
and treatise, the thought of Christ as Saviour was q
subordinated to that of Christ as King and Judge.
can we wonder at this. The sort of government
which men were familiar in those days was
despotism, which might be wise and benevolent,
was more often selfish, capricious, and cruel.
purpose of Redemption was therefore, so men thou
to substitute for this a Kingdom of God, not
despotic, but perfectly wise, just, and benevol
And such was the wretched state of mankind du
the break-up of the Roman Empire, that to b
home to the minds of men the thought that, in s
of appearances, the universe *was* subject to an o
potent ruler, perfectly wise, and just, and good,
a real salvation.

So long as the public services of the Church
in an unknown tongue, there was no place for hy
in the vernacular. There was devotional poetry
plenty, but always individual in sentiment and exp
sion. Only after the Reformation did congregati
singing form a part of the usual public worship;
even then, in the Calvinistic division of the Refor
Church, the service of praise was long restricte
metrical psalms. Hence we have few if any Fr
hymns of the Huguenot period adapted to ecclesi
cal seasons. It was otherwise where Lutheran influ
prevailed, and the sixteenth and seventeenth cent

lded many fine Christmas hymns in the German guage. Probably the best-known of these, at least English readers, is that of Gerhardt, " Fröhlich l mein Herze springen "—in English " All my heart s night rejoices ". The earliest English pieces to ich the name of Christmas hymns—as distinguished m carols—can be properly applied, are that of Ben nson, " I sing the Birth was born to-night ", and t of George Wither, " As on the night before the ssed morn ". With the later development of Christ- s church-song we are not here concerned.

14. CHRISTMAS CAROLS

From hymns we naturally pass to carols. The tinction is often overlooked; and a chap-book con- ning, say, thirty " Hymns and Carols ", so called, y include half a dozen true carols, the rest being de up of hymns, pious ballads, and sentimental festive songs more or less fitted to the season. hymn is essentially devotional; a carol, in the odern sense of the term, is a song in which a reli- ous topic is treated in a style that is familiar, playful, festive. The word " carol " originally meant a nce, especially a ring-dance,[1] accompanied with ging, like that of children, " Here we go round e mulberry bush ". We have a classical example this use in Chaucer (*Romaunt of the Rose*, lines

[1] The derivation of the word Carol has been the theme of much learned discussion. emote origin is usually traced from the Greek word *Choros*—the singing and dancing of a Greek tragedy—through such intermediate forms as the Latin *Chorus*, *Chorea*, an *Choreola* and *Carolle*. But one John Palsgrave, in a French dictionary published about , derives the word from Anglo-Saxon *Kyrriole*, which must be derived in turn from the ek *Kurios*, Lord. Some have suggested derivation from the Welsh *Carawl*; but the Welsh as more likely to have been borrowed from the English.

793–804). The poet comes upon a bevy of la dancing:

> " Upon the karolle wonder faste
> I gan biholde, til attè laste
> A lady gan me for to espie,
> And she was cleped Curtesie.
> Full curtisly she callèd me:
> ' What do you there, beau sire?' quod she;
> ' Come, and if it lykè yow
> To dauncen, dauncith with us now.'
> And I, withoutè tarrying,
> Wente into the karolyng."

Gradually the meaning changed, so as to denot merry song with a tune suggestive of dancing. the *Promptorium Parvulerium*, a curious English-L vocabulary written about 1440, we find " Carol, so palinodium "; another copy gives as the equiva " Psalmodium, psalmodinacio ". Agreeably to this read in Spenser's *Epithalamion*:

> " Hark how the cheerful birds do chant their lays,
> And carol of love's praise."

The earliest metrical composition to which term " carol " has been applied in England, which is at all related to Christmas, is in the An Norman dialect of the twelfth century. It has religious allusions of any kind, and is in fact a drinking-song; " Lordings, Christmas loves drinking " is a typical line. That Christmas a time specially suitable for merry songs was versally recognized; it was also remembered th was primarily a religious anniversary; it see

ural, therefore, that the merry songs of the season uld embody some religious element. We do not ce to our carols nowadays; but nothing deserves be called a carol which does not tell its sacred y in a mirthful strain, suggestive rather of the ce than of the closet or the church.

It is a curious fact that Christmas is the only ival for which carols have been not only written, kept in use. Thus it came to pass that in several nch dictionaries " carol ", defined as above, is in- preted *Chanson de Noël*, i.e. a Christmas song. Yet re have been good carols written for other seasons, nobody sings them, it is hard to say why. nehow it has come about that in England we e so dissociated religion from mirth that they can y shake hands about once a year. It is well if n even custom compels us to recognize that the gion most in harmony with the season is of a lthy all-round type, which hallows the whole circle life, trade, literature, politics, recreation; which es up the right old Hebrew carol and sings, " Praise d with psaltery and harp, praise Him with tim- ls and dances, and let everything that hath ath praise the Lord ".

15. ORIGIN OF CAROLS

For eight hundred years and more men had kept ristmas without carols, unless indeed the term be plied to Yule-tide drinking-songs; and when at gth these welcome aids to cheerful piety were duced, it was in connection with a great religious

revival. The birth-place of the true carol was It and its originator, indirectly if not directly, was Francis of Assisi—that eccentric genius in wh blended mirthfulness and asceticism, prophetic vour and childish simplicity, the heart of Christen has been compelled to recognize that heavenly wis which is content to be accounted folly for Chr sake. We cannot here narrate the strange life-stor St. Francis; it must suffice to say that the orig friars whom he gathered around him early in thirteenth century were the means of the gre religious revival that had ever been known in Wes Europe.

In those days religion was at a very low ebb; state of society was very rude, and that of m deplorable. The services of the Church were ducted in a language the people did not underst the Bible was locked up in an unknown tongue, had it been otherwise few could have read it; preaching was unusual and uninstructive. Fra and his friars preached homely sermons full of ho illustrations; and, defective as his gospel might it was the power of God unto salvation to multit in many lands. It is only within living memory Francis has come to be understood in Protestant c munities; until lately men thought of little but eccentricities, and the corruption of the *later* F ciscans. It was forgotten that in his day Christ thought of chiefly as the Awful Judge; the Sav was almost lost sight of in the "King of Ma tremendous"; Francis revealed Him as the "I Brother" of mankind as well. "The Child Je

/s Thomas of Celano) " had been given over to getfulness in the hearts of many, in whom, by working of His grace, He was raised up again ough His servant Francis ".

There is no evidence, nor indeed any likelihood, t Francis himself wrote carols; but some of his rades devised an instrument better adapted than n preaching to diffuse religious knowledge among common people. They composed, in the vulgar gue, bright homely songs on the great facts of gospel; and thus, nearly a hundred years before nte gave stability and literary form to the Italian guage, the Italians were singing in the festive strains the early friars the praises of the Child of hlehem.

Several carols of remarkable beauty and tenderness ascribed to Jacopo da Todi (otherwise called opone), a Franciscan poet of the latter part of the rteenth century. He is best known as the author two Latin hymns, each beginning " Stabat Mater "; of them, the " dolorosa ", probably the most hetic poem in all ecclesiastical literature; the other, " speciosa ", though not a carol, having so much common with our best carols as fairly to demand ognition in this place.

Here is an Italian carol of the same period. The hor is unknown; but the tune is almost universally iliar, being the theme on which Handel has built the ever-welcome " Pastoral Symphony ".

" In Bethlehem is born the Holy Child,
On hay and straw in the winter wild:
Oh! my heart is full of mirth . . . at Jesus' birth.

" They sing aloud in heaven, ' The Child is born,
Glory to God, and peace on earth forlorn:'
Oh! my heart, &c.

" Already shines the star, His advent-light,
It shines above the Child by day and night:
Oh! my heart, &c.

" First Mary greets the Child in worship true,
Wraps Him in swaddling-clothes, and loves Him to
Oh! my heart, &c.

" The Joseph lowly bows with reverence due,
And clasps Him in his arms, and loves Him too:
Oh! my heart, &c.

" The shepherds come upon the Child to gaze,
And worship Him with songs and sounds of praise.
Oh! my heart, &c.

" The mage-kings follow soon, the Child to greet,
Offering gold, and myrrh, and incense sweet:
Oh! my heart, &c.

" Let us adore the Child this Christmas-tide,
And offer Him our hearts and souls beside:
Oh! my heart is full of mirth . . . at Jesus' bir

From Italy the carol passed over to Spain, Fr
and Germany, everywhere retaining its essential
acter of childish simplicity, religious fervour, and
mirthfulness. Some of the old carols are very q
introducing not only legendary matter but pious fi
sometimes humorous. One old French carol, of
length, is curiously dramatic. Joseph and
arriving at Bethlehem, are, on various pretex

but reason assigned, refused admittance at several

At length a hostess, perceiving that Mary is stress, is about to make provision for her neces-, but is roughly forbidden by her ungracious and, whom she dares not disobey. Once more led, Joseph finds shelter in a stable, where the ised Child is born.

An interesting group of old German carols is that ein the singer represents himself as accompany-he shepherds in their visit to the Holy Family, addresses Mary and Joseph in the homeliest as as the kindliest fashion, and sometimes in the dest of dialect. Probably the best known and loved of all German carols is that written by er for his little son Hans in 1540: " From heaven e I come to you, To bring you tidings good true ". The tradition is that in Luther's house-the first five verses were sung as a solo, the r personating the Angel, and the remainder in us.

One very curious group, of which specimens in al languages are scattered throughout the south-of Europe, introduces gipsies in connection with Nativity. In an Andalusian carol the " rascally es " have stolen the swaddling clothes, and have left the Child a single rag. In a Spanish carol gipsies at the town gate welcome the three kings, he wise men from the East, with a dance. In a ençal carol the mage-kings are themselves gipsies, read the lines on the hands of the Child, of Mary, of Joseph, and predict their several destinies. le in an Italian carol a gipsy woman offers hos-

pitality to the Holy Family during their retre
Egypt. These odd fancies were probably an
growth of the belief, long widely entertained,
the gipsies were exiled Egyptians.

The " Noëls " are a peculiar group, of whic
have examples both in French and English, in w
the word " Noël " or " Nowell " is oftentime
peated, generally as a refrain, and evidently in
sense of " news ". The English specimen, "
first Nowell an angel did say ", is too well k
to need quotation.

The original purpose of carols required that
should be in the vernacular. But the mediæval c
were, as a rule, fairly familiar with Latin, and it
only to be expected that some of them would co
Latin carols. Some of these became widely po
such as: " In hoc Anni circulo " (" In the ending
year "); " Dies est Lætitiæ " (" Royal day that c
gloom "); " Resonet in laudibus " (" Faithful
your praises bring "). But still more widely po
were the Macaronics, in which the language is m
part being in the vernacular and part in Latin.
these there are French, German, and English exa
The original of the familiar " Good Christian
rejoice " is of this class, part Latin and part Ge
thus: " In dulci Jubilo, Nun singet und sey froh,
The celebrated Boar's Head Carol, of which
anon, is an English Macaronic. Here are a few
of another, of which in the original the lines are
nately Latin and German:

" A Child is born in Bethlehem;
Rejoice therefore, Jerusalem.

" Low in a manger lieth He,
Whose kingdom without end shall be.

" The ox and ass that near Him feed
Know that the Child is Lord indeed.

" From Seba come the duteous kings,
One gold, one myrrh, one incense brings.

" In this, the time of Christmas joy,
To bless the Lord be our employ.

" All glory, Lord, to Thee be done,
Now seen in flesh, the Virgin's Son."

16. THE OLDEST ENGLISH CAROLS

The earliest known copy of an English carol is a ment published by Ritson, and written, probably, t A.D. 1410:

" I saw a sweet, a seemly sight,
A blissful burd, a blossom bright,
That mourning made and mirth among:
A maiden mother meek and mild
In cradle keep a knave child,
That softly slept; she sat and sung,
Lullay, lulla balow,
My bairn, sleep softly now."

very old stanza is valuable as illustrating some marked features of our best old English carols. alliteration is characteristic of the time when it written. But notice the homely simplicity of the ı; the Blessed Virgin sings just such a lullaby ight have been sung by any English mother in year 1410. Then see how the whole scene is

treated as if literally present; just what has been above about the great events of sacred history l mystically repeated on their anniversaries. And serve how the whole is brought into personal rel with the singer; not the bare historic "there w but the personal "I saw". The true carol i the product of an age of cold historic criticisr belongs to an Age of Faith.

There is in existence an old MS. song-book, siderably more than 400 years old, supposed to belonged to a professional minstrel. From t great number of genuine carols were edited fo Percy Society; some of them, it may be, h down by tradition from a time earlier than the fragment. It would be pleasant, if space permitt reproduce about a dozen of these, and point out most interesting features. This is impracticabl we must be content to take a few stanzas her there, which show how the old minstrels treate leading incidents of the Holy Nativity. First, Annunciation:

> "Gabriel, that angel bright,
> Brighter than the sun's light,
> From heaven to earth he took his flight:
>
> "At Nazareth, that great citie,
> Before a maid he kneel'd on 's knee,
> And said, 'Mary, God is with thee:
>
> "'Hail, Mary, full of grace;
> God is with thee, and ever was,
> And hath in thee chosen a place, &c.'"

We have not found among the oldest carols any

e to the occasion of the journey to Bethlehem. In which probably belongs to the early part of the enteenth century we find:

" To Bethlehem city in Jewry it was
That Joseph and Mary together did pass,
All for to be taxèd with many-one mo';
Great Cæsar commanded the same should be so.

" But when they had entered the city so fair,
A number of people so mighty was there
That Joseph and Mary, whose substance was small,
Could find in the inn there no lodging at all.

" Thus they were constrained in a stable to lie,
Where oxen and asses they used for to tie:
Their lodging so simple they held in no scorn,
And against the next morning our Saviour was born."

The mystery of the Miraculous Birth is dwelt on these old ditties with considerable *naïveté*. It is easy to find a quotable stanza on the subject; haps this, from the old minstrel's MS., is the most sentable:

" Blessed be that lady bright
Who bare a Child of great might
Without grief, as it was right,
Maid Mother Mary.
God's Son is born,
His mother was a maid
Both after and beforne,
As the prophet said,
With ay, ay, ay,
A wondrous thing it is to see
How maid and mother one can be:
There was never none but she,
Maid Mother Mary."

Another, from a MS. written about 1450, is wo
quoting:

> " I sing of a maiden that is makeless (i.e. mateless);
> King of all kings to her Son she ches (?chose).
>
> " He came all so still to His mother's bower
> As dew in April that falleth on the flower.
>
> " Mother and maiden, was never none but she:
> Well may such a lady God's mother be."

Of the shepherds keeping watch over their flock
night, we have several descriptions; here is one of
quaintest:

> " About the field they piped full right,
> Even about the midst o' the night;
> They saw come down from heaven a light:
> Tirlè, tirlè, so merrily the shepherds began to blow.
>
> " Of angels came a company
> With merry songs and melody:
> The shepherds anon 'gan them espy:
> Tirlè, tirlè, so merrily the shepherds began to blow."

The shepherds usually find the Holy Child am
the ordinary occupants of the stall. The old carc
appear to have accepted in simple faith the legen
the ox and ass already referred to; a legend which
left its impress not only on popular folk-song, bu
the religious drama, and on works of art, even on s
of a superior order. So the old minstrel sings:

> " Between an ox stall and an ass
> This Child then truly born He was:
> For want of clothing they did Him lay
> In the cratch among the hay."

Of the appearance of the Star, and the journey of wise men from the East, we have many very spirited riptions. The wise men are always kings; their es are usually—not always—Gaspar, Melchior, and hazar; one is young, one old, and one of middle they represent the respective posterities of Shem, , and Japhet, and the youngest is generally a Moor Negro. Their gifts to the Holy Child are explained rding to the symbolism which we owe to Irenæus Nazianzen; the gold proclaims His kingship, the incense His godhead, and the myrrh His mor-. Perhaps the best verses are these (spelling ernized):

" Three kings came out of Indian land
To see that wondrous Infant bent,
With rich presents in their hand;
Straightly a star before them went,
A wondrous thing it was to see:
That star was more than other three,
And it held the course to that countree,
With aye, aye, I dare well say
They did not miss of ready way.

" When they with that Lady met,
They found the Child upon her knee;
Full courteously they did her greet,
And present Him with giftès three:
As King they gave Him gold so red,
Myrrh, incense for His Godhead,
Of their offering this we read;
With aye, aye, I dare well say,
They worshipped Him on Twelfth Day."

he slaughter of the children by Herod is a favourite

topic in the carols, and is often treated with the wil exaggeration, the Innocents being sometimes cou by thousands. At other times the cruelty of Hero made the subject of the Virgin Mother's cradle-s as in a very pretty carol printed in 1587:

" Lulla, lulla, lullaby:
My sweet little Babe, what meanest thou to cry?
Be still, my blessed Babe, though cause thou hast to mo
Whose blood, most innocent, the cruel king has sworn.
And lo! alas, behold what slaughter doth he make,
Shedding the blood of innocents, sweet Jesus, for Thy s
' A King is born,' they say, which King this king would
Oh woe, and heavy woeful day, when wretches have their

17. LEGENDARY, MYSTICAL, AND MODERN CAROLS

Some of the old carols are very rich in legen lore, sometimes from the Apocryphal gospels, s times from sources which cannot now be ident There are often comical adaptations of Oriental m to Western surroundings, as in the famous Cherry Carol, which tree in the original legend is a date Joseph is an old man, walking with his young " in a garden gay, where cherries were growin every spray ". He is troubled with a fit of jeal and when Mary asks him for cherries he repli rude language, suggesting doubts as to the tru the message which he has had from the angel. his doubts are soon dispelled, and his jealousy reb for

" Mary said to cherry tree, ' Bow down to my knee,
That I may gather cherries by one, two, and three.'

he uppermost bough then bowed down to her knee;
Now you may see, Joseph, those cherries were for me.' "

ph asks pardon for his unjust suspicions; and ere
an angel tells him that "Our Heavenly King"
shortly appear:

"He shall not be born in house or in hall,
Nor in the place of Paradise, but in an ox's stall,
He shall not be wrapped in purple nor in pall,
But in fair white linen, as usen babies all.
He shall not be rocked in silver nor in gold,
But in a wooden manger that resteth on the mould."

charming simplicity of these lines is inimitable.
n a less widely-known carol, "The Carnal and
Crane", the minstrel, who evidently understands
language of birds, repeats an overheard confabu-
n bewteen a crane and a carnal—presumably a
on-crow (French, *corneille*). They narrate two old
nds, both of mediæval origin. First, the wise men
Herod that Christ is born:

this be true,' King Herod said, 'which thou tellest to me,
is roasted cock that lies in the dish shall crow full fences
hree.'
e cock soon freshly feathered was by the work of God's
own hand;
d he crew, 'Christus natus est', in the dish where he did
stand."

Holy Family journey toward Egypt; the wild
ts worship the Child; and He is recognized
honoured by a husbandman who is sowing
:

"'God speed thee, man,' said Jesus; 'go fetch thy ox and wa
And the corn which thou this day hast sown, go, carry
home again.'"

The harvest thus miraculously hastened is reaped a
loaded;

"Then there comes King Herod with his train so furiously
Enquiring of the husbandman whether Jesus passed by?

The husbandman replies that "Jesus passed that w
when my seed was sown"; and Herod retreats, thi
ing it must be "full three-quarters of a year since
his seed has sown".

Some of the carols represent the Infant Christ
predicting His passion; in one of them Mary is we
ing at the recital:

"Now peace, Mother, now peace, Mother, your weeping d
me grieve,
For I must suffer this (He says), for Adam and for Eve."

Some carols of the Holy Childhood are not o
reverent; the Withy Carol, for instance, of wh
variants are found in Herefordshire and in Irela
In this the Child Jesus is insulted by three boys;
prove His superiority over them He builds a bridg
sunbeams, on which they attempt to follow Him o
the sea, but fall in and are drowned. For this M
chastises Him with a green withy; and He aven
Himself by a curse on the entire species: "The wi
shall be the very first tree that perishes at the hea
This is much on the lines of the worst things in
apocryphal gospels.

In the carol of the Holy Well, which seems to

ather later origin, we are on far higher moral ground. : Child Jesus, having asked of His mother if He ht go to play, goes " as far as the holy well "; but epulsed by the other children, " lords' and ladies' s ", whom He finds there. Mary hears of it, and ngry, and begs Him to

'ake away those sinful souls, and plunge them deep in hell.'
Jay, nay,' sweet Jesus mildly said, 'Nay, nay, that must not be;
'here are too many sinful souls crying out for the help of Me.'"

Of numeral carols, such as the " Twelve Articles ", welve Points ", and the like, little needs to be said: r form is probably due to a fanciful association with Twelve Days of Christmas; otherwise they would qually suitable to any other season. The same may aid of " Dives and Lazarus ", " Jacob's Ladder ", he Boy's Dream ", " The Seven Virgins ", and rs, which, without any intelligible reason, are found hristmas chap-books.

We seem to have no English specimens of the rical Carols which are heard in France, especially Brittany; wherein the singers of one village indulge easonable gibes at those of another. But we have ls which seem to have been originally mystical or gorical, but to be so corrupted by oral tradition as have become mere nonsense-verses. Such are hristmas-day in the Morning ", and that class of neral carols of which the " Seven Joys " is a fair ple.

A mystical or allegorical carol beginning " Lully ly; The falcon has borne my mate away ", is

assigned to the fourteenth century. It contains evi allusions to the altar, the sacrament, and perhap some incidents in the legend of the Holy Grail; the meaning is by no means easy to determine.

A mystical carol of considerable length, and no means devoid of beauty, is ascribed to John Aw a blind monk of Haughmond Abbey, Salop; the is that of the early fifteenth century. The follo are a few stanzas:

" There is a flower sprung of a tree,
The root thereof is called Jessè,
A flower of price;
There is none such in Paradise.

" The seed thereof was Godès Sond (*sic*),
That God Himself sowed with His hand
In Bethlehem, in that holy land;
Amidst her harbour He there her fand;
This blissful flower
Sprang never but in Mary's bower.
. . . . . .

" Angels there came out of their tower
To look upon this freshly flower,
How fair He was in His colour;
And to behold
How such a flower might spring in gold.
. . . . . .

" I pray the flowers of this countree,
Where'er ye go, where'er ye be,
Hold up the flower of good Jessè,
For your freshness and your beauty,
As fairest of all;
And ever was, and ever shall."

Happily one of the best of the English my

ls has come down to us without serious corruption. his the singer personates our Lord; it is the eve His marriage with His true love, the Church:

" To-morrow shall be my dancing day:
I would my true love so did chance
To see the legend of my play,
To call my true love to my dance.

" In a manger laid and wrapped I was,
So very poor, this was my chance,
Between an ox and a silly poor ass,
To call my true love to my dance."

incidents of His baptism, fasting, and temptation, betrayal and passion, are similarly told:

" Then down to hell I took my way,
For my true love's deliverance;
And rose again on the third day
Up to my true love and the dance.

" Then up to heaven I did ascend,
Where now I dwell in sure substance
At the right hand of God, that men
May come into the general dance."

Several of the Elizabethan poets wrote carols of a e refined character. We have good ones from the s of Herrick, Wither, and other poets of the time Charles I. But the ascendancy of Puritanism was, he time, as fatal to carols as to maypoles. After the toration there were festive songs in plenty, but few ls. The rustic muse here and there produced dly ballads " of the Childhood and Life of Jesus, e of which, of great length, still do duty for carols

—or did so quite lately—in various places. But "
ye that are to mirth inclined ", " Faithful Christian
" The Black Decree ", and " Colmans Carol ", tho
not bad of their kind, have not the artless spontan
of the true carol. By far the best of the class is
famous song of Nahum Tate, " While shephe
watched their flocks by night ", which has served
keep from oblivion a name that else had deserved
be dragged down to the deepest pool of Lethe by
dead weight of his " new version " of the *Psalms*
his perversions of Shakespeare. But the song i
pious ballad, not a carol; the festive element is lack
there is no dance in it—unless perchance it be sun
the old rollicking tune of " Nativity ". It form
kind of transition from the true carols to the hy
of which the Methodist Revival brought forth s
a glorious harvest. But who needs to be reminde
" Hark! the herald angels sing ", or " Christi
awake!" or " Angels, from the realms of glory "
" Brightest and best ", or " It came upon the n
night clear "?

Hone, writing in 1823, gave a list of eighty-
carols which he had collected. Of this he says,
excludes all that are disused at the present time,
does it contain any of the numerous composit
printed by religious societies under the denomina
of Carols ". Of these about half have appeared
chap-books within the last thirty years: but nin
ten of them are really hymns. When Hone wr
it seemed as if the singing of carols had almost
out, except in remote country places, extinguished
the utilitarian spirit of the age. " Carols " (he s

gin to be spoken of as not belonging to this cen-
." But a new generation arose, which had eyes
ee that the past, however faulty, was not wholly
Careful editors and enterprising publishers made
liar to the public the best of the old carols, with
proper tunes, as well as translations from alien
ces; and modern poets, imbued with the true
stmas spirit, have produced many new carols
ely inferior to the old.

18. USE OF CAROLS

As to the manner of using the old carols, no doubt
is for the most part domestic; and just as certainly
e old days as in modern times, they were sung in
streets on Christmas Eve or in the early morning
t always in a spirit of pure devotion. Hone, in
Ancient Mysteries, p. 90, quotes a curious stanza,
h, by its spelling, might seem to be of the fifteenth
ury, unless indeed it is (as we strongly suspect) a
r modern imitation:

" The lewid peple than algates agre,
And caroles singen everi' criste messe tyde,
Not with schamfastenes bot jocondle,
And holey bowghes aboute; and al asydde
The brenning fyre hem eten, and hem drinke,
And laughen mereli, and maken route,
And pype, and dansen, and hem rage; ne swinke,
Ne noe thynge els, twalve daye' thei wolde not."

e *Every Day Book*, vol. i, p. 800, he says: " These
s, which now exclusively enliven the industrious
nt maid and the humble labourer, gladdened the

festivity of royalty in ancient times. Henry VII the third year of his reign (1487), kept his Christ at Greenwich. On the twelfth night, after high m the king went to the hall and kept his estate at table; in the middle sat the dean, and those of king's chapel, who immediately after the king's course sung a carol."

As to whether carols were to any great extent s stituted for the usual psalmody in church, we are very fully informed. Certainly Herrick's carols designed to be sung in the Chapel Royal at Whitel At Exeter the various church choirs used to go a singing carols through the night; and then must in the cathedral at seven in the morning, where joined in singing the Old Hundredth Psalm be the usual service. Davies Gilbert, writing in 1 says that in the west of England, down to the en the eighteenth century, on Christmas Eve it was tomary in many houses to spend the time in c singing from seven or eight in the evening till into the night; the intervals being devoted to consumption of hot cakes and ale or cider. T "On Christmas day these carols took the plac psalms in all the churches, especially at after service, the whole congregation joining; and at end it was usual for the parish clerk to declare loud voice, his wishes for a merry Christmas a happy new year to all the parishioners".

At many places in Wales a service called "Plyga i.e. Dawn, was held at four or five o'clock in the m ing. Sometimes the parson was escorted from house to the church by young men with torches,

: church was lighted with coloured candles. The
iracter of the service varied in different places;
netimes there was celebration of the Holy Com-
nion; sometimes the parson sang the first verse
a carol, the clerk sang the second, and then carols
re sung round the church in procession. In some
ces refreshment was provided in the shape of hot
)th. These services, which seem suggestive of a
vival from the Midnight Mass of pre-Reformation
es, are said to have generally died out in the Episco-
Church soon after the middle of the nineteenth
tury. About the same time, it is said, Plygain
vices began to be held in Welsh Nonconformist
pels; but of late they seem to have been more
al on the morning of the new year.[1] Much akin
the Welsh Plygain is the custom that prevails in
rway. There, as in all the Scandinavian countries,
usual type of religious thought is Lutheran, and
Midnight Mass is therefore not to be looked for;
it is replaced by a service called *Julotte*. The
ular time for family gatherings is Christmas Eve;
in the morning before daybreak the whole parish
embles in the church for a service of praise, which
sists chiefly of singing. Rows of candles are ar-
ged along the backs of the benches, so that the
rch is brilliantly illuminated; and as many Nor-
ian parishes are of great extent, it is no uncommon
ig to take a journey of several miles to participate
the "Julotte". In Lapland the parishes are of
greater extent, so that the journey to and from

[1] The Welsh language has an ample supply of carols. Hone mentions two volumes, one containing 66 carols for Christmas, and 5 for summer; the other containing 40 Christmas carols, 1 for winter, 3 for May, 9 for summer, 1 to the nightingale, and 1 to Cupid.

the church may occupy two or three days. And
is said that the sleigh-ride with its jingling be
is looked forward to by the children for mont
together.

This seems the most convenient place to menti
what is reported from Finland, where every sailor a
fisherman endeavours to spend his Christmas at hon
Accordingly all boats come into harbour on St. Thoma
Day (21st December), and preparations for Christm
begin. On Christmas Eve everyone takes a hot ba
and the evening is spent in singing hymns and telli
stories of adventure. All rise before dawn, and proce
to church—the journey being often of many mil
sometimes over a frozen arm of the sea. Lights
set in the church windows, and a cross is placed o
the door, " to show that there is Christmas joy within
Special holiday fare is given to the cattle, and a sh
of corn is set upon the roof, that the birds may k
festival.

A very curious custom obtained in several paris
in the Isle of Man. People assembled in the chu
on Christmas Eve—" Oiel Verry ", i.e. Mary's E
they called it: each in turn sung a carol as a s
holding in his or her hand a lighted candle. T
carols were very lengthy; but the singer had to s
if the candle went out. The ceremony ended
midnight.

At Crondall, in Hampshire, until about 18
carols used to be sung from the top of the chu
tower. A similar custom still survives in a few to
in Germany, and was formerly much more gene
Luther's carol " From heaven above I come to yo

D 287

"GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN; LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY!"

From the painting by J. Seymour Lucas, R.A.

The artist has chosen as the title of his picture the opening lines of a carol popular during the seventeenth century.

the one usually sung, the melody being led by a
mpet or cornet.

Of late years a pleasant custom has grown up, in
ny places, of church choirs, or glee-parties, per-
bulating a village or district, singing carols, and
lecting donations for some well-understood chari-
le object. This practice surely embodies the genuine
rit of Christmas, and deserves general imitation.

19. CHURCH OBSERVANCES—ADVENT

Remembering that Christmas is, above all things,
eligious anniversary, we turn awhile to the Church
servances of the season. From early in the sixth
tury it has been usual throughout Western Christen-
m—though not in the Greek Church—to set apart
four Sundays next preceding Christmas as a season
devotional preparation. This was, and still is, known
the season of Advent; and special prayers, anthems,
l hymns for the four Sundays and some other days
given in the Church service books. According to
Roman use, and those uses which generally pre-
led in England before the Reformation, the *Te Deum*
l *Gloria in excelsis* were not sung during Advent;
t all the antiphons had a note of expectation, leading
to the " Seven great O's " at Vespers on the seven
/s preceding Christmas Eve. These have happily
n restored to use within the last generation, and
ir use is by no means limited to the Episcopal
urch.

Advent being a preparation for Christmas, as Lent
s for Easter, it came to be regarded as in like manner

a season of abstinence. So the Roman Church ordai
that every Wednesday and Friday of the four we
should be kept as a fast; and that if marriages t
place they should be "without outward pomp
festivity". Kirchmeyer tells us that in Germ
witches and evil spirits were thought to be especi
mischievous on the Thursdays in Advent. On th
days children ran about the streets, knocking at ev
door, and crying, "The Advent of the Lord: a ha
New Year", for which they expected apples or pe
At the same time girls sought by divination with oni
and faggot-sticks to learn something about their fut
husbands.

In Rome, Naples, and other Italian cities, image
pictures of the Blessed Virgin are often placed at st
corners and in other public places. It was custom
in the eighteenth century, and perhaps is still, for
Calabrian shepherds, during the last few days of Adv
to come into the cities with musical instruments, usu
bagpipes, and play before these images and picture
an act of devotion. They would also play before a
penter's shop "to show respect to St. Joseph".

Advent ends with Christmas Eve. It was custom
in the papal chapel at Rome that, if a Sovereign Pri
were present at Matins on that day, he should r
one of the lessons, holding in his hand a drawn sw
in token of his readiness to defend the Church. A
this custom had become obsolete, the Pope was acc
tomed on Christmas Day to bless a sword and h
which were sent as gifts to some royal personage.

In Holland the characteristic observance of Chr
mas Eve is, or was, of a more democratic type. At n

it the young men of a town or village, some of
n in fantastic costumes, meet in the principal
are or open space, and after singing *Gloria in*
lsis, or its Dutch equivalent, choose one of their
ber as Star-bearer. A large lantern has been pro-
d in the shape of a star, containing many candles
mounted on a pole. This is borne at the head of
ng procession through every street, the company
ing the *Gloria*. The whole effect is said to be
impressive.

A custom existed in Yorkshire which certainly can-
be called a Church observance, but which is most
veniently mentioned here, because it is connected
the season of Advent. The children went about
ying what was called " the Yule Baby ", an ela-
tely dressed doll in a decorated box, which repre-
ed the manger at Bethlehem. Sometimes there
e two dolls, to represent the Holy Child and His
her. It was thought unlucky if any house was not
ed by these " Advent Images ". This custom was,
l likelihood, a survival of the mediæval " præsepio ",
hich more hereafter.

20. CHURCH OBSERVANCES— CHRISTMAS BELLS

As is well known, according to ecclesiastical usage
day begins at sunset. The evening service on what
now commonly call Christmas Eve was therefore
" First Vespers " of Christmas Day. At such a
ve season it was a matter of course that every
ice should be heralded by the merry chiming of

church bells: and whatever else ultra-Protestant
and Puritanism have wisely or unwisely swept aw
we may be thankful they have not silenced the Chr
mas bells. Long and ever louder may they ring
the joyous invitation:

" O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant;
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem:
Low in a manger
Lies the King of Angels;
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord."

There is one very quaint bit of folk-lore pertaining
Christmas bells. At Dewsbury, and no doubt at s
other places, it was customary that the great
should toll, as if for a funeral, for an hour before n
night; and as soon as the hour was past the rin
struck up a merry peal. This seems to have be
survival of a rather widespread mediæval custom,
purpose of which was said to be to give the po
of darkness notice of the approaching birth of
Saviour. Later it was called " Tolling the De
knell "; for, it was said, " The Devil died when C
was born ". It is to be feared that he had a sp
resurrection; but the saying was a striking, if exa
rated way of presenting the truth that the birt
Christ gave a death-blow to the empire of Satan.
this conceit Dr. J. M. Neale wrote a delightful
poem to an ancient carol tune:

" Toll, toll, because there ends to-night
An empire old and vast;
An empire of unquestioned might

O'er present and o'er past;
Stretching wide from east to west,
Ruling over every breast,
Each nation, tongue, and caste.

"Toll, toll, because a monarch dies
Whose tyrant statutes ran
From polar snows to tropic skies,
From Greenland to Japan:
Crowded city, lonely glen,
Ocean, mountain, shore, and fen
All owned him lord of man.

"Toll, toll, because that monarch fought
Right fiercely for his own,
And utmost craft and valour brought
Before he was o'erthrown;
He the lord and man the slave;
His the kingdom of the grave
And all its dim unknown.

"Joy, joy, because a Babe is born
Who, after many a toil,
The scorner's pride shall laugh to scorn,
And work the foiler's foil:
God as Man the earth has trod,
Therefore man shall be as God,
And reap the spoiler's spoil."

Christmas Bells, in England, are popularly asso-
d with frost and snow. But their music is heard in
hern latitudes, and is as seasonable in an Australian
mer as in an English winter. Here are a couple of
zas from a book entitled *The Christian Year under Southern Cross*, published in New Zealand:

" No touch of winter's frosty breath,
No snowclad fields 'neath skies that lower;
All Nature thrills with joyous life,
As faintly from the distant tower
Ring out the cheerful Christmas Bells.
Hark! how their cadence softly swells
O'er open fields and bosky dells,
' In Excelsis Gloria!'

" 'Neath skies of blue the plains lie decked
In thousand varying shades of green.
Soft shadows sweep o'er meadows gay
With many a floweret's brilliant sheen;
While Christmas Bells in glad refrain
Sound the glad tidings once again
Which angels sang in raptured strain,
' In Excelsis Gloria!' "

It is perhaps scarcely worth while to mention that in many English villages handbell ringers the principal houses about Christmas-time colle largess.

21. CHURCH OBSERVANCES— MIDNIGHT MASS

Most readers will remember Scott's poetic meration of Christmas customs; amongst whic reminds us that

" On Christmas Eve the bells were rung,
On Christmas Eve the Mass was sung:
That only night of all the year
Saw the stoled priest his chalice rear."

Reference to the Roman or Sarum Missal will co this statement, provision being made for three m

Christmas Day, while on no other festival is a mid-
ht mass permitted. The custom was instituted at
ne in the earlier half of the fifth century. The Pope
g the first mass at midnight, at Sta. Maria Maggiore;
second at St' Anastasia; and the third at St. Peter's.
There can be little doubt that " Midnight Mass on
istmas Eve only " originated in a belief that the
h of our Lord occurred about midnight—a matter
ut which there is no real evidence one way or the
er. The belief had, however, some imaginary sup-
t in a pious misapplication of a passage in the *Book*
Visdom (ch. xviii, 14–5):

hen peaceful silence enwrapped all things,
d night in her own swiftness was in mid-course,
ine all-powerful Word leaped from heaven out of the royal
throne,
stern warrior into the midst of the doomed land."

s, as the context clearly shows, refers to the slaying
e first-born of Egypt; but mediæval divines applied
the Incarnation of the Word. Hence a beautiful
n carol, probably of the fourteenth century, begin-
; " Quando noctis medium ":

" When in silence and in shade
Earth at midnight had been laid,
Working out the Father's plan,
In the Virgin's womb made Man,
God His earthly life began."

ertainly seems fitting that the central ordinance of
stian worship should have a place among the
nnities of the Saviour's birthday; and one of the
t evils that have resulted from the perversion of

that ordinance into the Romish Mass is that it sometimes become a point of orthodox Protestant to thrust into a subordinate and obscure place what Apostles and primitive Christians placed foremost.

In Paris, and probably in other French cities was usual to proceed direct from the Midnight M to a family gathering, where as sumptuous a meal provided as funds would allow, and where fa affairs were discussed, and endeavours made to app quarrels and put an end to misunderstandings. Brittany poor old women wait about the church to take charge of the lanterns which the country all carry to light them on their way. After the r the owners of the lanterns, on reclaiming them, alw give substantial alms to the caretakers.

At Madrid people traversed the streets with torc tambourines, and guitars, and after mass danced in body of the church.[1] A similar custom existed in Spanish-American cities. In Sicily the midnight vice was often sadly lacking in reverence, down pagan licence intruding; and it is said to have much the same in the Rhineland, until Midnight M was abolished.

At Rome, at Sta. Maria Maggiore, certain p of wood were preserved, which were alleged to be of the actual cradle of our Lord! These it was u within the last century, to bring forth in so procession early on Christmas Morning, and

[1] Dancing in church was very early practised in Spain at several festivals. It bidden by a Council at Toledo in 589 or 590; but popular custom was too strong f siastical authority, and it survived, at least at Christmas, till about 1200. Even recent times (if not to this day), on certain feast days choir-boys with castanets dance the altar in Seville Cathedral. In York Minster, till the seventeenth century, the ch were accustomed to dance in the nave after morning prayers on Christmas Day. Besançon, until 1727, it was usual to dance a "bergette".

igh mass to deposit them on the principal altar. According to Kirchmeyer it was customary in some rts of Germany, after the third mass, to place on e altar an effigy of the Holy Child, duly wrapped in vaddling clothes; around which the boys and girls ould dance and sing carols. A variant of this custom as—perhaps still is—observed in the Church of the oly Nativity at Bethlehem. At the end of the mass e " Bambino " is placed on the altar, and then carried solemn procession to the crypt; where it is laid on e silver star in the pavement which is supposed to ark the actual place of the Divine Birth. The narra- ve is read from the *Gospel of Luke*; and when the ader comes to the words " laid Him in a manger ", e effigy is lifted from the floor and placed in a rock- wn trough which represents the manger, and which any simple-minded pilgrims believe to be the veri- ble cradle of the Holy Child. In mediæval England, ter matins, a deacon—or the bishop if he were present chanted the " Genealogy " in *St. Matthew* (chap. i), llowed by the *Te Deum*. This custom still survives some Benedictine churches.

22. NATIVITY PLAYS

Christmas was very early provided with one of those mi-dramatic services which in course of time devel- ed into the Mystery or Miracle Play. In the cathedral Rouen, in the twelfth century, an image of the Virgin d Child was placed in a stable behind the altar. A y, placed before or above the choir, and personating angel, announced the Nativity to certain canons, as

they entered below in the character of shepherds. they passed through the great door of the choir, ves in tunics and amices, many more boys stationed high began to sing " Glory to God in the highes to which the shepherds replied " Peace on earth men of goodwill ".[1] As they advanced up the choir t priests, clad in dalmatics, and representing wom met them inquiring, " Whom seek ye?" They answer " Our Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord ". The pri then drew back the curtain, saying " The Little C is here, as said Isaiah the prophet "; they then sho the mother, saying " Behold the Virgin ". On this shepherds bowed, worshipping the Child and salut the Mother, and returned to the choir singing " A luia ". Thus was the Story of Bethlehem both ac and sung in the mediæval Church.

From such beginnings grew that rich treasury religious drama which flourished in England from thirteenth to the sixteenth century, and which survives on the Continent, at Ober-Ammergau elsewhere. But the English Nativity Plays were exclusively, nor even chiefly, associated with Christ they formed portions of those great cycles of pl which were acted in the open air on movable stage " pageants ", by members of various guilds, and usu in the summer-time. It is not necessary, therefore treat them at any great length. It may suffice to that we possess five series of these plays, four Eng and one Cornish, besides a few detached specim The cycles contain from twenty-five to forty-e

[1] " In terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis "; this, the rendering of the Vulgate a older Latin, as well as of several other very ancient translations, is supported by a m of the oldest Greek manuscripts of the gospel.

ys apiece, and together they cover the whole field of red history, from the Creation to the Final Doom. e treatment of the Nativity may be estimated from Interlude in Longfellow's *Golden Legend*, if we nember that the modern poet exhibits a refinement ich is totally lacking in the rugged originals. A few ef selections may be interesting.

In the York play of the Nativity, Mary thus solilo-zes:

"Now in my soul great joy have I;
I am all clad in comfort clere;
Blest mote He be.
Jesu my Son that is so dear,
Now born is He.
Hail, my Lord God! Hail, Prince of Peace!
Hail, my Father, and hail, my Son!
Hail, Soveran Sege, all sins to cease!
Hail, God and Man, on earth to wonne!
Hail, through whose might,
All this world was first begun,
Mirkness and Light!"

The Wakefield plays are characterized by a rough nour. The shepherds are grumbling about hard k, poor wages, heavy taxes, cold weather, and nagant wives. They lie down to rest; and while ers are sleeping one of them steals a sheep and ies it home, where his wife hides it in the cradle. and by the shepherds come in quest, and discover sheep when one of them insists on kissing the baby—whereupon the thief is punished by being ed in a blanket. The rest then return to the fold; , again lying down to sleep, are thus aroused by angel:

" Rise, herdmen hynde; for now is He born
That shall take fro' the fiend what Adam had lorne:
That warlock to shend, this night is He born!
God is made your Friend; now at this morn
He behests, at Bedlem go see,
There lys He in a crib poorly."

There is generally quaint humour in the home gifts presented by the shepherds. In the Chester pl they include a bell, a flask, a spoon, a hood, a pipe, a a nut-hook. But their salutation in the York play really beautiful:

" Hail! the Fairest of field-folk for to find!
Fro' the fiend and his feres faithfully us fend;
Hail, the Best that shall be born to unbind
All the bairns that are born and in bale bende."

The Coventry plays make much use of apocryph matter, including the Cherry Tree incident. After t shepherds have presented their gifts, Herod appea proclaiming:

" I am the mightiest conqueror that ever walked on groun
Magog and Madrocke, both these I did confound,
And in this bright brand their bones I brake asunder,
That all the world on those raps did wonder!"

He claims to be lord of lightning, prince of purgator and chief captain of hell! When he learns that t wise men have gone home another way he vows, if can catch " those villain traitors ", he will burn the and forthwith orders all the children in Bethlehem be slain. The bodies of the children are brought him in a cart; but, finding that Jesus is not amo

m, having escaped into Egypt with Joseph and Mary, " rages in the pageant and in the street ", and lops off in pursuit.

There are no Nativity scenes in the great Cornish le of religious drama; but there are two plays not tained in either of the cycles, which were written one John Parfre in 1512. One of them is on the ughter of the Innocents, the other on the presentation he Infant Jesus in the temple. In the latter, Simeon ie bishop " speaks a prologue in which he expounds doctrine of the Incarnation, and prays that he may die until he has seen the sweet face of the Divine ld. Mary and Joseph enter, and present the Child Simeon, together with the offering of two young es; and he, after reciting *Nunc Dimittis*, para- ases it in sixteen lines of rhyme. Then Anna calls h a company of young maidens, exhorting them to orship this Child, very God and Man ". Simeon ears Jesus in his arms, going a procession round ut the temple "; and all this while the maidens sing *ic Dimittis*. Simeon returns the Child to His ther, predicting His crucifixion, and the " sharp rd of sorrow [that] shall cleave her heart atween "; bids Anna teach those maidens " to please God of t honour ". She at once responds: " Worship we is that shall be our Saviour; all at once come on, follow me "; and they conclude the performance a a dance.

Crude Nativity plays are still acted in Roumania; in the middle of last century they were common oland, Provence, Naples, and Spain, the characters g sometimes represented by puppets.

Within the last few years Nativity plays, modern structure and reverent in expression, have been p sented at Christmas-tide in several church halls a schoolrooms; and it is not impossible that these m be first steps toward a resuscitation of the religi drama.

23. THE PRÆSEPIO

On Christmas Eve, 1224, a very realistic tableau the Nativity was arranged by St. Francis in a vill church at Greccio in Italy. Joseph and Mary, rep sented by real persons, watched beside a manger which a figure of the Holy Child lay upon straw, w a real ox and ass were tethered close by. Mass celebrated, and Francis preached on the topic of season. This was the origin of the simple object les called the "Præsepio", or "Presepe", or popul "The Christmas Crib"; which with innumer variations has been reproduced at Christmas in alm every Roman Catholic church in Christendom; has found its way, with divers adaptations, far bey the limits of the Church of Rome—as, for exam in the celebrated Moravian School at Neuwied.

A visitor to Rome in the early part of the ni teenth century describes the præsepio in the Chu of the Ara Coeli as best worth seeing. Daylight completely excluded, and the artificial light "was managed as to stream in fluctuating rays from in vening silvery clouds, and shed a radiance over Child and His mother, who in a graceful attit holds up the drapery which half conceals the slee Infant". His swaddling clothes are richly embroide

both He and His mother are adorned with jewels for the purpose by princesses and other ladies igh rank. "Groups of cattle grazing, peasantry ged in different occupations, and other objects en the picturesque scenery; and every living ure in the group with eyes directed to the præsepio, prostrate in adoration." During the visit thus ibed, a little girl of six or eight years old stood bench and recited a suitable discourse "with all esticulations of a little actress; perhaps in com-oration of those words of the Psalmist, quoted ur blessed Lord, 'Out of the mouths of babes sucklings Thou hast perfected praise'".

n Southern Italy the "presepe" is a domestic as as a Church custom. The manger is constructed dorned a week beforehand, and is often a genuine of art. C. A. Miles, in *Christmas in Ritual and ition*, reproduces a photograph of a magnificent olitan "presepe" which represents the Holy ly in a shed formed amidst the ruins of a Corin-temple. On each side the shepherds approach their offerings; one leads a lamb, another is ded by a dog, others have brought gifts in baskets. or five baby angels are fluttering above. The d ass do not appear in the shed; but below is a near the entrance of which oxen are standing or . Shepherds are negotiating with a doorkeeper e admission of a few sheep into the cave, while nber of goats are left outside. The whole is built one corner of a lofty hall, of which it almost es the ceiling.

e domestic presepe is often the work of the

children; and in Rome an enormous bazaar, as we numerous shops, supply materials for its construc There are earthenware figures varying in price fr halfpenny to many shillings, cork to represent r work, moss, and liverwort, and scenery roughly pai in watercolours. For the construction frequently cludes not only the stable or cave and its occup but the surroundings of Bethlehem, imagined in plete ignorance of geography and history; " an astic medley of chaos and luxuriant riches, a ra negation of all the notions of time and space, th what the bold Roman boy gathers around the cri which after all they sometimes forget to place Bambino ".

From the first setting up of the presepe till Ch mas Eve visits are exchanged, and mutual critic are passed on the domestic preparations. Min come round with bagpipes and carols, and sin recite prayers before every presepe whether in h or church. Then on Christmas morning the Bam is placed in the manger, with solemn ceremonies, feasting begins in earnest. In Bohemia the præs or as it is there called " the Bethlehem ", is a perm memorial " arranged on a tiny stage, and often ha down from generation to generation; and great is expended in carving, painting, and dressing figures and keeping them in repair ".

In some parts of France, and perhaps in other c tries, the præsepio serves as it were to visualize belief, already mentioned, of a mystical repetiti the Incarnation at Christmas. This is thought relation to the Midnight Mass, at which sole

ple gather from outlying hamlets *literally* to visit Holy Child. Sometimes great store of provision brought, nominally as gifts to Joseph and Mary, lly for a picnic after mass, at which the participants guests of the Holy Family. This custom gave birth a class of curious carols, abounding with local allus both to persons and places, sometimes complintary, sometimes sarcastic. No such carols exist in glish; but there can be little doubt that the interest- group of carols, in many languages, which have form of a cradle-song sung by the Blessed Virgin he Holy Child, were originally associated with the sepio.

. CRADLE-ROCKING: THE POSADA, ETC.

In this connection mention must be made of the ious custom of Cradle-Rocking (Kindel-wiegen), ch arose in Germany about the fourteenth century, long retained its popularity. The crib became a lle that could be rocked, at first by priests, who sonated Joseph and Mary, while choir and people g and danced around. Then the custom became nestic, but still a real act of devotion. Some very ty German carols relate to this custom, with which fine old Latin carols "Quem pastores laudavere" "Resonet in laudibus" were also associated. The ctice died out very slowly; it survived at Tübingen ate as 1830, and to a still more recent time in out-he-way places in Tyrol. In Sicily, especially at ssina, at least down to the middle of last century, as usual on several nights before Christmas to fire

a large number of crackers, as a midnight salute "the Madonna and her sacred Mother"! Then Christmas night, i.e. the night following first vespe the streets were thronged and every house was light in honour of the procession of the "caro Bambino This commenced at midnight, and was formed by t clergy, municipal bodies, lines of military with mus church attendants, &c., all singing and bearing torch and followed by a tiny wax doll in the arms of a pri beneath a gorgeous canopy. Fireworks were let off the streets, and few people went to bed before dawn.

In some of the Spanish-American cities, especia in Mexico, there is a curious domestic custom call the *Posada*, i.e. the Inn, based on a tradition that Jose and Mary had a nine days' journey from Nazareth Bethlehem. For the due observance of this cust several neighbouring families—preferably kinsfolk unite; and on each of the nine evenings from 16th 24th December they gather in one selected house, t ladies taking in turn to act as hostess and give a pres of some kind, however small, to each one of the co pany. The evening is usually spent in merrymaki dancing, and a romp with the children. But on evening of the nine observance becomes distinctly re gious. The attendance of a priest is secured, a tempor altar is fitted up in the principal room, and under it placed the præsepio and its appropriate figures. midnight approaches the priest reads certain p scribed prayers, while incense is burned, and t company kneel in couples, each holding a candle. procession is then formed, the images of Joseph a Mary being carried in front; and the whole comp

ter every room in the house, above and below, sing-
g a litany. As the litany ends two or three persons
o into a room, and shut the door. The rest sing a
ol, in which Joseph begs admittance for himself and
wife, who can go no farther. To this request a
usal is given, and the procession goes on until, on
stroke of midnight, the hostess leads to a room or
ic, or perhaps to the flat roof, where the representa-
n of a stable has been prepared. There the images of
eph and Mary are placed with all possible reverence,
l the ceremony ends. Formerly the procession took
ce early on each of the nine evenings; but it came to
thought irreverent that a religious service should be
dwiched between games and dances; so now it is
d on one evening only, and shortly before midnight.
This seems the most convenient place in which to
cribe a curious old print in the collection of the
iety of Antiquaries (Broadside 305). It was printed
1701 by J. Bradford in Little Britain, and sold for
enny. It measures 10 inches by 8½ inches. It repre-
ts the Virgin with the Child in the manger, Joseph
nding by. There are four shepherds, two adoring,
with a basket, and one with a bagpipe. Three
els are kneeling, and several are hovering above.
ere are sundry beasts and birds around, whose sup-
ed utterances are indicated by Latin labels in their
uths. The cock crows "*Christus natus est*" (i.e.
rist is born); the raven croaks "*Quando?*" (when?);
crow caws "*Hac nocte*" (this night); the ox lows
Ubi?" (where?); the sheep bleats "*Bethlehem*"; and
angels sing "*Gloria in excelsis*". In the border are
instruments of the Passion. A similar idea is

embodied in a quaint little French poem (Macaronic which tells that of old the animals spoke better Lati than French, and after the conversation above reporte adds that the ass brays "*Eamus*" (let us go) and th calf replies "*Volo*" (I am willing).

25. THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS

The mediæval Church did not, on the whole, d its duty by the children. Perhaps it may be pleaded by way of excuse, that a celibate priesthood coul scarcely be expected to understand children. But a least it remembered that Christmas was emphaticall the festival of childhood; and possibly with that fac in view it assigned the commemoration of "the Hol Innocents" to the third day after Christmas. A ver pretty recognition of the children's interest in th season was continued for a number of years in th thirteenth century, in the church of the Benedictin Nunnery at Godstowe; where on Innocents' Day th public prayers were said by the little girls of the con vent school. Archbishop Peckham put an end to th in 1278.

Another custom of similar purport was long an widely prevalent in cathedral and collegiate church having schools attached. On St. Nicholas's Day, the 6t December, the boys elected one of their number "bishop". He was dressed in full canonicals, an during his term of office enjoyed very substantial priv leges. In several inventories of Church property w find mention of mitres, copes, and other vestments the boy-bishop, apparently of as costly material

ose worn by the actual dignitaries. He exercised thority over his comrades of the school or choir, whom he assigned various offices, some of them sing as priests, some as canons, &c. In some places was escorted to the church, where he presided as hop during the service; and afterwards went in cession, singing, from door to door, collecting money, ot begging it as alms, but demanding it as the hop's subsidy ". Early in the thirteenth century the hedral dignitaries were called on to act in subordi- e positions, as taper- and incense-bearers; but this s forbidden in 1263. The boy-bishop and his train ually took part in the Church services, and in De- nber, 1299, they sang vespers before King Edward I.

St. John's Day (27th December) after Complin y were usually entertained at supper by the dean one of the canons. On Innocents' Day they went in emn procession, and performed every part of the urch service except actually saying mass. It is ged that even this exception was not always main- ed; but this is very difficult to believe. The per- mance culminated in the recitation of a sermon by boy-bishop (it was probably written for him), and he statutes of St. Paul's School, 1518, all the scholars enjoined " to hear the child-bishop's sermon on ocents' Day ". At the end of Complin—the last ning service—he brought his episcopate to a close pronouncing the Benediction. If the boy happened die during his term of office, he was buried with same honours as if he had actually been a bishop; the tomb of one of these boys is still to be seen in sbury Cathedral.

The custom of electing a boy-bishop was observ
at St. Paul's, Canterbury, Winchester, Exeter, Sal
bury, York, Newcastle, Beverley, Rotherham, C
chester, Eton, Westminster, and Lambeth; and pro
ably in many other places. Hone goes so far as to s
" The ceremony of the boy-bishop is supposed to ha
existed not only in collegiate churches, but in alm
every parish ". This seems to be an exaggeratio
but it certainly did exist in a number of comm
grammar-schools, and in several London parishes, n
ably St. Mary at Hill, St. Andrews Holborn, and
Nicholas Olaves. There are indications that it w
specially favoured where there was a dedication in t
name of St. Nicholas, who was deemed the espe
patron of schoolboys. It was suppressed in Engla
by proclamation dated 22nd July, 1542; there wa
partial revival in Queen Mary's time; but we hear
more of it after her demise. On the Continent it
tained in Switzerland, France, and Spain; but gra
ally became debased, " irreverent and foolish ", a
was finally extinguished at Zug in Switzerland, in 17
There have, however, been local revivals within
last few years both in England and on the Contin
The plan seems to be that the parish clergyman sel
the " bishop " from among the members of a b
guild.

Another curious custom, in recognition of Chr
mas as peculiarly the children's festival, is that
practised at Rome. The Church of Ara Coeli, wh
stands above a lofty flight of 124 marble steps, is
to occupy the site, and to be built from the materi
of the ancient temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. It c

emorates by its dedication an absurd story of a vision
en by Augustus Cæsar of a Crowned Infant seated
a star. In it is preserved an image of the Holy
ild, artistically carved in olive wood, crowned and
velled, and swaddled in gold and silver tissue. This
Bambino " is supposed to have miraculous powers;
d it is taken out in its own carriage, attended by its
n servants, to visit the sick, who hope for healing
rough its imaginary virtues. All through the Christ-
s season it lies in the church crib, and is visited by
usands. On a platform before it little boys and
ls of all classes recite little speeches in honour of the
fant Saviour. " They say their pieces " (says Coun-
s Martinengo) " with an infinite charm, that raises
f a smile and half a tear." Another writer says:
They have the vivid dramatic gift, the extraordinary
ence of self-consciousness that is typical of Italian
ldren; and their so-called ' preaching ' is anything
a wooden repetition of a lesson learnt by heart."
the Octave of Epiphany there is a great procession;
Bambino is carried out to the open space at the
of the steps, where " a priest raises it on high, and
emnly blesses the Eternal City ".

. PURITAN HOSTILITY TO CHRISTMAS

Reference has been made to the Puritan hostility
Christmas. This is much more easily explained
n justified. It was not that Puritanism was gener-
averse to mirth, though there were ascetic Puritans
well as ascetic Papists. After all, there is not very
ch to choose between the Papists at Coventry, who

burned a woman for possessing the scriptures in English, and the Puritan at Banbury, who "hanged his cat on Monday for killing of a mouse on Sunday". However, the Puritans were so deeply impressed with the sanctity of the Lord's Day that they transferred to it not only all the stringency of the Law of Moses respecting the Sabbath, but much of the spirit of rabbinical tradition. Now the Unreformed Church had quite subordinated the Lord's Day to the great ecclesiastical festivals; and the Anti-puritan party under Elizabeth and James I showed a like inclination. The Puritans thought that festivals of mere human institution, when thus exalted above a Sabbath of divine obligation, became objectionable, and had better not be observed. The first two Stewart kings, on the other hand, sought to extinguish the rather austere Puritan Sabbath by encouraging Sunday games, and to this end put forth the notorious *Book of Sports*. This declaration of war against the Puritan ideal provoked an assault on all those Church festivals which were thus put in open competition with the Sabbath; and as Christmas was the most popular of them all, on it were poured out the vials of the fiercest indignation. Pamphlets were published in which it was denounced as at once heathenish and popish, and its observance was declared to be sinful!

This was in close accord with the sentiment which then prevailed in Scotland. The religious movement in that country had been not merely a Reformation it was a Revolution. Its leaders, Knox, Melville, and the rest, thought the Romanized Church too bad to be mended; in their view it must be ended, and

w beginning made, strictly on the model which they lieved they had found in the New Testament. Now tainly the New Testament makes no mention of clesiastical festivals; so the new beginning included e sweeping of them all away, Yule among the rest. n the 26th December, 1583, the Glasgow Kirk Session t five persons to public penance for keeping "the perstitious day called Yule". Ten years later, in 93, the same Glasgow session ordained that keepers this feast should be debarred from the privileges the Church, and punished by the magistrates; and 1649 the General Assembly appointed a commission report on "the druidical customs observed at the s of Beltane, Midsummer, Hallow-e'en, and Yule"; doubt with a view to their more effectual suppres-n. But the end of it was merely that all the worst the old Christmas customs were transferred to New ar's Day.

In the Scottish Highlands the Presbyterian order l the Puritan sentiment were far less dominant than the more southern counties, and in them Prelacy l Roman Catholicism each had numerous and in-ential adherents. In these therefore Christmas per-ed in surviving, in spite of Kirk Sessions and neral Assemblies. But it would seem from Mrs. ant's *Popular Superstitions of the Highlands* that vn to the latter part of the eighteenth century its ervance was more festive than religious, consisting the most part of games, dancing, feasting, and bling. Moreover, to the Puritan extremists *any* ognition of Christmas, whether festive or religious, s equally offensive. It was much the same across

the Atlantic. It is said that in one of the New Englan settlements a number of young men proposed to cel brate Christmas by a football match; but the governo intervened, saying, " If their conscience forbids the to work, my conscience forbids me to allow them play ". Some compensation for the suppressed Chris mas was found in the newly instituted " Thanksgivi Day " on the last Thursday in November.

In 1633 William Prynne, a fanatical Puritan lawy published a huge volume more than half as big as t Bible, to prove the sinfulness of almost every kind amusement, but especially of stage plays and Chri mas festivities. The title of this amazing monument learned folly is *Histriomastix, or the Players' Scourg* In it he denounces all Christmas games and feasti as a wicked survival of the heathen Saturnalia. B he does not seem seriously averse to a sober religio recognition of the anniversary. His fanatical hostil to all sorts of sport and merriment would probab have been laughed at and forgotten, but for the bru punishment inflicted on him for his foolish book. T effect of setting him in the pillory and cutting off h ears was to exalt a crank into a hero and a martyr.

Most of the English Puritan leaders had a gr admiration for the Church of Scotland, which th deemed one of " the best reformed Churches "; a political exigencies, on the breaking out of the Ci War, gave an enormous impetus to Scottish ideas England. These ideas were acquiesced in, no do in loyalty to the " Solemn League and Covenant ", many who regarded them with little sympathy. Perha it was by way of compromise that, in 1642, a volume

irty-six metrical psalms appeared, set to secular ballad nes. The title was " Psalmes or Songs of Sion, turned to the language and set to the tunes of a strange land. y W[illiam] S[latyer], intended for Christmas Carols, c.". But " The New Forcers of Conscience ", as ilton called them, would have no compromise; and in 1644, when for a season Puritanism was in power der the Long Parliament, the Monthly Fast was pointed for Christmas Day. It was by this time a mewhat risky business to defend the old order. So 1645 a satirical tract appeared with the following le: " The Arraignment, Conviction, and Imprison- g of Christmas on St. Thomas day last, and how he oke out of prison in the holidays and got away. . . . ith a Hue and Cry after Christmas . . . and what ift he was fain to make to save his life. . . . Printed Simon Minc'd Pye for Cissely Plum Porridge, and be sold . . . at the sign of the Pack of Cards in Mus- d Alley in Brawn Street."

On 22nd December, 1647, the town crier of Canter- ry, by order of the Mayor, proclaimed a market on ristmas Day following. On that day, however, being turday, only about a dozen shops were opened. These re stormed by an angry mob, and compelled to close. few of the rioters were committed to prison, but were cibly released. The Sunday passed peaceably; but Monday the rioting was renewed, and several persons re seriously injured. Peace was restored by an agree- nt between the leaders of the two factions " that no n shall further question or trouble them ". On 24th cember, 1652, about four months before Cromwell persed it, the Parliament gave order " That no

observation shall be had of the five-and-twentieth da of December, commonly called Christmas Day; n any solemnity used or exercised in churches upon th day in respect thereof".

But surely the limit was reached in 1656, when Puritan crank named Hezekiah Woodward printed tract with this amazing title: "Christmas Day, the o Heathens' Feasting Day in honour to Saturn their Id God, the Papists' Massing Day, The Superstitio Man's Idol Day, The Multitude's Idle Day, Satan That Adversary's Working Day, The true Christi Man's Fasting Day, Taking to heart the Heatheni customs, Popish superstitions, ranting fashions, fearf provocations, horrible abominations committed agai the Lord, and His Christ on that day and dayes follo ing." It may suffice to add that the sequel was wort of the title-page.

In Evelyn's *Diary* we read that on Christmas D 1657, he and others were arrested while engaged worship in Exeter Chapel, and were detained for seve hours. However, they were allowed to finish the s vice, which included a celebration of the Holy Co munion.

Indeed there are indications that the Cromwelli regime was less intolerant than that of the Long Parl ment; and in spite of restrictions Christmas mana to survive, both in its religious and its festal aspe This at least may be gathered from the following ti page: "Make roome for Christmas; or Remem your Christmas Box: being a delightful new Book of merry Jests, rare Inventions, pretty conceits, Chri mas Carols, pleasant Tales and witty Verses, writ

Lawrence Price, 1657, who wishes well to all those
t bear goodwill to Rost Beef, Plum pottage, white
ves, Strong beer, warm Clothes, good fires, and soft
lgen."

The blunders of well-meaning people are often, in
r effect, worse than crimes; and it is fairly open
question whether the beheading of Charles I was
he long run half so harmful to the Puritan interest
he blunder of trying to suppress the Old English
istmas. One thing is certain; when "Old Christmas
rned" after the Restoration, it was with a new face.
violent reaction against Puritanism led to the
radation of a great Christian anniversary to a mere
henish Yule-tide holiday; and instead of the old
ls to the praise of the Babe of Bethlehem, the
alier rhymesters poured forth rollicking songs to
praise of "Plum pudding, goose, capon, minced
, and roast beef".

Meanwhile the misdirected Puritan conscientious-
persisted in some quarters for three or four genera-
s. Far into the eighteenth century grave Presby-
n divines preached against the observance of Christ-
; and as late as 1830 hymn-books were in use, in
tist and other congregations, which either made no
ision at all, or barely admitted one or two poor
ns, suitable for a commemoration of the Holy
vity. In Scotland the Puritan tradition so far
ives that even to this day the recognition of Christ-
either in its religious or its festive aspect, is con-
l to a minority of the population. In most places
ness goes on as usual.

27. MUMMING

Let us now turn from the more definitely religiou to the purely festive aspect of Christmas and its cu toms; and first of *Mumming*. The dictionaries defi this as "making diversion in disguise"; and th merrymakers who are called Mummers in England we called *Guisards* in Scotland. Throughout the Briti Isles this was for ages a favourite sport, not at Chris mas only, but on other festive occasions. In Irelan it was most prevalent on May Day, and in Scotlan about the New Year. But in England Christmas an Easter, especially the former, have been the favouri seasons of the Mummers; the tradition being that bo mumming and carol-singing legitimately begin on S Thomas's Day—the shortest in the year. A famili old ditty runs thus:

> "To shorten winter's sadness
> See where the nymphs with gladness
> Disguisèd all are coming
> Right wantonly a-mumming,
> With a fal-lal-la."

It was customary, though not universal, for the gi to dress as boys, and the men as women; and th disguised to visit the neighbours' houses, singing, dan ing, and partaking of good cheer. In many places t performers, if sufficiently skilful, would execute sword dance. This was altogether different from t Scottish sword dance, and, though usually introduc with some harmless buffoonery, was a really artis performance; the swords, in the course of the dan

eing plaited together in the form of a "rose" or ar. As lately as the middle of the nineteenth century was practised in Durham county, in the Yorkshire ales, and (with some difference) in Devon. It is even ntinued to this day in the neighbourhood of Flam- rough. Elsewhere the Morris dance was affected— ough this was usually thought more seasonable at lay Day and Whitsuntide—and the hobby-horse was t forgotten.

Where anything beyond dancing was attempted, it ually took the form of a rude burlesque drama, with enty of fighting. The characters were various, but ey generally included a bully, who was killed, and doctor, by whom he was resuscitated. The leader mmonly spoke a ridiculous prologue, varying in fferent places; one of the drollest, used in Somerset, as follows:

> "Here comes I, liddle man Jan,
> With my girt zword in my han';
> If you doant all dew as you be told by I,
> I 'll zend ye all to York vor to maake apple pie."

he performance was usually pure buffoonery, but metimes there was a simple plot, such as the rescue a Christian maiden from the clutches of a terrible urk.

In the most widespread of the mummeries the lead- characters are St. George, Alexander King of ypt, Hector—sometimes called Slasher, The Dragon, d Doctor Brown. The prologue is spoken sometimes Father Christmas, and sometimes by a small boy a scarlet vest, who personates Robin Redbreast. In

the Cornish version St. George kills in succession the Dragon, the Turkish Knight, and the Giant, each of whom is cured by the Doctor. He, after the last cure is given a basin of " girdy grout ", and is then kicked out; and the epilogue is spoken by Judas with the bag, or by

" Little Devil Doubt;
Give him money or he 'll sweep ye all out."

Some have described these Mummery Plays as a degradation or burlesque of the old Miracle Plays, but this is very unlikely. They are more probably a survival from pre-Christian times. There was a custom in many parts of the Roman Empire, of going about on New Year's Day in masks, often of animal faces, in skins of beasts, and in women's dresses. This practice was strongly condemned by the clergy from the fourth century onward; specimens of their denunciations are extant from at least eight different countries. If we may judge from the analogy of what still goes on in Western Africa, these animal masks were worn for the due performance of sacrificial or magical rites, the wearers being priests or members of secret societies whom the uninitiated supposed to be demons. This belief would be fostered by the early Christian clergy to create a greater horror of idolatry. It is almost certain that some such masquerade is the explanation of the Witches' Sabbath on Walpurgis-Nacht.

It being alleged, whether truly or falsely, that crime was facilitated by the disguises, and especially the masks worn by mummers, order is said to have been given by Henry VIII that all mummers wearing visors

ıould be apprehended as vagabonds, and committed prison for three months, or fined at the king's easure.

In some places the Mummery took the form of a ance of Fools, the dancers wearing motley, with caps ıd bells. But this belonged less to Christmas than to e New Year and Plough Monday.

In Somerset, and no doubt elsewhere, mumming generated into *Mumping*, that is, plain undisguised gging. In many west-country villages the poor old omen go around on St. Thomas's Day soliciting asonable gifts, which it is deemed uncharitable to fuse. In Gloucestershire this is called " Thomasing "; Warwickshire " Corning "; and in Kent " going a oding ". A variety of " mumping rhymes " are curnt in various places, of which one heard in Somerset ay serve for a sample:

> " Christmas is coming, the beef is getting fat;
> Please drop a penny in a poor man's hat!"

rmerly, in return for the expected alms, the mumpers fered sprigs of evergreens, useful for home decoran.

28. HODENING, SCHIMMEL, ETC.

In some parts of Kent, and round about Richmond, Yorkshire, there was a custom the purely heathen igin of which is obvious. The head of a horse, her a skull or a wooden effigy, was fixed to a pole, and jaws snapped by means of a string. The party carried ndbells and sang songs, for which they expected meat d drink, or money. In Kent the head was made of

wood, and its mouth was open for contributions. T
ditty was:

" Three jolly hodening boys
Lately come from town,
For apples or for money
We search the country roun'."

Some of the Kentish wagoners used to keep the he
in their stables through the year " for luck ".

A similar practice existed in some parts of Wal
The skull was dressed with ribbons, and carried b
man under a white sheet. The jaws were made to h
anyone it could lay hold of, who was only released
payment of a forfeit. This was called " Mari Llwyd
E. J. Newell, in his *History of the Diocese of Llandaf*
says that the custom survived at Cardiff as late
1886, if not later.

It is hard to conceive that Hodening, or M
Llwyd, could ever have any relation to Christm
They seem to be either an unintelligent survival, o
designed caricature of some custom of the pre-Christ
Yule. The word " hodening " is evidently reminisc
of Odin, who, whatever else he may have been,
certainly a Sky-god. He was represented as a sta
man with one eye, there being only one sun in the fir
ment. He was wrapped in a blue mantle spangled w
stars; and rode on a white horse that was swifter t
the wind. The horse's head can scarcely be anyth
else than a relic of Odin's horse Sleipnor.

The German counterpart of this toy is called
" Schimmel "—the Grey or Fusty One. The hor
head is fixed to a pole, and this, sometimes, to a
who goes on all fours, covered with a white cl

sewhere the horse is formed by three or four lads, e of whom is the rider. He is veiled, and sometimes rries on his head a pot with glowing coals, which ine through openings that represent eyes and mouth. ie " Schimmel Reiter " is sometimes accompanied a " Bear "—a boy dressed in straw, who plays the rt of a bear chained to a pole.

In other parts of Germany the head is that of a ck or goat, usually made of wood, with a jaw that tters. It butts children who cannot say their prayers. is is the " Klapperbock " or " Habergais ".

In Denmark, Norway, and Sweden the " Julebuk ", h a buck's head and dressed in a hide, butted the ldren whom he met in his peregrinations. Some- es the name was applied to a straw puppet. There s a story of a girl who danced with a straw Julebuk, d found that her partner was none other than Satan nself. Another Julebuk was carried off by the Evil e whom he had mimicked. A grim story was told in e of the Yorkshire dales (where Scandinavian cus- ns and traditions long survived) of a man who, early the nineteenth century, went about in a black ox- e with the horns above his head; he was stabbed death by the village idiot, who gleefully boasted that " had killed the devil ".

29. WASSAILING

Somewhat akin to mumming is *wassailing*. " Was- !" was the old Anglo-Saxon drinking pledge, equi- ent to " your health "; to which the response was Drinkhaile!" At the Saxon Yule feast it was quite

usual, without any feeling of irreverence, to drink "Wassail to the Lord!" The Wassail Bowl was indispensable at an Old English Christmas feast. At Jesus College, Oxford, there is a huge silver-gilt bowl, formerly used at such celebrations, which will hold nearly ten gallons, and the ladle half a pint.

The Wassail Bowl was considered appropriate not only to Christmas, but also to New Year's Eve and Twelfth Night. At Court, and no doubt elsewhere, it was in daily use during all the twelve days of the festive season, and was brought in with more or less of ceremony. In the Ordinances for the household of King Henry VII the following occurs with reference to Twelfth Night: "Item, the chappell to stand on one side of the Hall" (probably the choristers of the Chapel Royal), "and when the Steward cometh in at the Hall door with the Wassell, he must crie three times 'Wassell, Wassell, Wassell,' and then the chappell to answer with a good song". The correct charge of the Wassail Bowl was "lamb's wool"; a mixture of ale with roasted apples, sugar, and spice. To this Shakespeare seems to allude, when he makes Puck say:

> "Sometimes lurk I in a gossip's bowl
> In very likeness of a roasted crab";

and he describes winter as the season "When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl". Herrick bids us:

> "Crown the bowl full
> With gentle lamb's wool—
> Add nutmeg, sugar, and ginger,
> With store of ale too;
> And this ye must do
> To make the wassail a swinger."

Here are two recipes said to have been used in the oyal kitchen in 1633. It will be observed that in the rst, as in Herrick's rhyme, the apples are not separately ientioned.

(1) Set ale on the fire to warm, boil a quart of ream with two or three whole cloves, add the beaten olks of three or four eggs, stir all together, and pour ito the ale: add sops or sippets of fine Manchet or rench bread; put them in a basin, and pour on the arm mixture, with some sugar and thick cream on iat; stick it well with blanched almonds, and cast n cinnamon, ginger, and sugar, or wafers and mfits.

(2) Boil three pints of ale; beat six eggs, the whites id yolks together; set both to the fire in a pewter ot; add roasted apples, sugar, beaten nutmegs, cloves, id ginger; and, being well brewed, drink it while hot.

The origin of the name "lamb's wool" is quite nknown. The only etymology we have met with is iat suggested by the antiquarian Vallancy. He says iat the bowl, with its compound of apples and ale, as common to all great festivals, especially Hallow-e'en, hich was dedicated to the angel or spirit who was ipposed to keep guard over fruit, seeds, &c. Accordgly that day, in some Celtic dialect, was called "La as ubhal", i.e. Apple Day; which by easy corruption ecame "lamasool", and finally "lamb's wool". But hy the name of a day should be transferred to that a beverage is not easy to tell.

Query, if the more general use of distilled spirit in e early part of the eighteenth century did not lead the frequent substitution of Punch for the time-

honoured lamb's wool; a change that has not alwa promoted an increase of sobriety.

In many places it was customary for young men, ar elsewhere for maids, to go from farmhouse to farm house with a great wooden bowl of spiced ale, gai bedecked with ribbons and garlands, inviting the i mates to drink " Wassail " to the season. The custo continued in Gloucestershire far down into the nin teenth century, and perhaps is not yet quite extin The song which accompanied the visit was a rollicki Bacchanalian ditty, beginning:

" Wassail, wassail all over the town!
Our toast it is white, our ale it is brown,
Our bowl is made of a maplin tree;
We be good fellows all—I drink to thee."

Then follow benedictions on the master and mistre the horse, the ox, and the next year's crop; and t song concludes:

" Be there here any maids? I suppose there be some;
Sure they 'll not let young men stand on the cold stone:
Sing hey-ho, maids, tirl back the pin,
And the fairest maid in the house let us all in."

In Herefordshire, on Christmas Eve, the oxen w visited after supper, and a health was drunk in str ale or cider to the best or favourite ox. A large ca with a hole in it, was then hung on the ox's horn; was tickled to make him toss it, and omens were dra from the way it fell. The usual incantation was to t effect:

" Here 's to thy pretty face, and thy white horn:
God send thy master a good crop of corn,

Both wheat, rye, and barley, and all sorts of grain;
Next year, if we live, we 'll drink to thee again."

The party then returned to the house, but found the door fast bolted. It was only opened when someone had guessed what had been provided for supper, or when a merry song had been sung; after that the remainder of the night was passed in feasting and jollity.

Wassailing of trees, in Devon, Somerset, and elsewhere, is something quite different, and belongs to *Old* Christmas Eve, i.e. 5th January. It will be treated of in its proper place.

In Yorkshire the Wassail Bowl has long been obsolete, though the name, in its variant "Wessel-cup" or "Vessel-cup" still survives. But what the children carry about is the Yule Baby, already described. The song that accompanies it, certainly the best of the Wassail songs, begins:

"Here we come a-wassailing
Among the leaves so green;
Here we come a-wandering
So fair to be seen:
Love and joy come to you,
And to you your wassail too;
And God bless you, and send you a Happy New Year."

In the Black Country of Staffordshire a rabble of young urchins make night hideous from St. Thomas's day to Twelfth Night. They carry neither Wassail bowl nor Yule Baby; but yell, in every variety of discord,

"A pie sat in a pear tree, the hen sat clucking by;
I wish you a Merry Christmas, and every day a pie;

A pocket full of money, a cellar full of beer,
And a good fat pig in the pig-sty to last you all the year.
The roads are very dirty, my shoes are very thin,
Please, good mistress and master, chuck a penny in.
A pie, a pie," &c., *ad libitum*.

30. CHRISTMAS EVE

We have already referred to Christmas Eve as th accredited time for placing the seasonable decoration evergreens, &c., both in house and church. Thi though the most obvious, was not the only preparati for the feast which was more or less tinged with supe stition. In many places, especially in Scotland, befo the Reformation, it was almost a matter of religiou obligation to emphasize the holiday aspect of the seaso On Christmas Eve the house must be thorough cleaned, all borrowed articles returned, all tools la aside, no lint allowed to remain on rock or whe and such work as could not be completed was stoppe and as far as possible made to look as if it were co plete. Finally, a cake was baked for every person the house; and if anyone's cake happened to be broke it was an omen of ill luck to the person for whom th cake was intended. These cakes were usually flavour with caraway; and their circular or annular form h been thought to indicate a survival from the heath sun-worship of Yule-tide.

There are many customs in many countries relati to Christmas cakes, most of which seem to be su vivals of old-time superstitions. Not much of this wou seem to attach to the Christmas cake of East Yorksh —just an ordinary " spiced cake ", with raisins, c

ants, lemon peel, &c.; or to the " wigs ", or caraway uns, which in Shropshire were dipped in ale. But n other places " Yule dows " were given by bakers to heir customers—small images of paste, human or nimal in form. Such are common in many parts of rance and Germany; sometimes the cakes actually epresent the Holy Child; elsewhere they are oblong, dorned with His figure in sugar. In many places the akes are horned, and French ploughmen give to the oor as many of them as they have oxen or horses. In me parts of Catholic Germany magical powers re ascribed to bread baked on Christmas Eve and oistened with Christmas Dew. This, it is said, will ever grow mouldy, and is a cure for snake bites. he notion seems to be associated with the antiphon Rorate Coeli desuper ", i.e. " Drop down dew, ye eavens, from above, &c.", which is sung at Vespers uring Advent. A similar superstition is found in ie south of France and in the Italian Tyrol. In weden and Denmark a cake in the form of a boar ands on the table throughout the festive season, vidently connected with the cultus of the Boar's Head, f which we have to treat hereafter.

In Poland monks bring round small wafers of flour nd water, stamped with sacred figures, and blessed y a priest. Christmas Eve is a strict fast; but when ie first star appears the feasting begins. A few straws re scattered under the table, and a chair is left vacant or the Holy Child. All the members of the household, ervants included, break the aforesaid wafers between iem, exchanging mutual good wishes. After supper ie children are led to another room, where Father

Christmas—or as he is called in Poland " The Sta Man "—appears in his proper person. He is often th parish priest in disguise; he examines them in th catechism, reproves those who give wrong answer and tells the rest that he has brought them reward for their good conduct. These are brought in by youn lads, who carry a large illuminated paper star, and sin carols.

In Roumania the traditional Christmas cakes are thi dry leaves of dough, eaten with honey, syrup, or othe flavouring. These are supposed to represent th swaddling clothes of the Holy Child. In Greece th Christmas cake has a cross at the top. After supper o the sacred Eve nothing is removed from the table, i the hope that Christ will come and eat during th night. Analogous to this was an old Welsh custom unbolting all the outer doors on Christmas Eve, i case the Holy Family should wish to enter.

Christmas Eve being a fast in Roman Cathol countries, fish is in great demand. At Hamburg an other parts of Germany, and in Styria, carp is eaten f supper; in Saxony and Thuringia, herring salad; Brittany, cod; in Italy eels are specially popular. Whitstable, in Kent, the fishermen were accustomed choose eight of the largest whiting from every bo these were sold separately, and their price reserved f a feast on Christmas Eve in honour of St. Rumbald, th supposed patron of the fishery. Naturally the e came to be called " Rumbald's Night ". A simil custom is said to have obtained at Folkestone.

Most schoolboys remember the story of a king wh died of indigestion, caused by eating too greedily

mprey pie. By ancient custom a lamprey pie is nnually presented to the king at Christmas by the ty of Gloucester; the custom is sometimes costly, as mpreys are often difficult to procure at that season.

The Gloucester custom reminds us of numerous cal traditions relating to Christmas pies. We shall ave something to say hereafter on the English mediæval e. It may suffice here to mention that the more rdinary pie was supposed to occupy the attention of e housewife on Christmas Eve; and that, if we may elieve Herrick, the holy season did not always afford adequate protection from hungry and predaceous embers of the professionally unemployed. He bids s

> " Come guard this night the Christmas pie,
> That the thief, though ne'er so sly,
> With his flesh-hook don't come nigh
> To catch it
> From him who alone sits there
> With his eye still in his ear,
> And a deal of nightly fear,
> To watch it."

n Tyrol, on St. Thomas's Day, an elaborate pie is aked which is marked with the sign of the cross and prinkled with holy water before it is put in the oven. is not eaten till St. Stephen's Day or Epiphany, when is cut by the housefather with considerable ceremony. ach maidservant has also a pie, which she takes home share with her kinsfolk. If a lover offers to carry er pie, that is understood to be a *proposal*, which she ccepts or not according to circumstances.

31. THE YULE LOG

A seasonable Christmas, in England, is a cold one and our ancestors were much of the opinion of Charles Lamb, that of all the enjoyments of the season the most indispensable is "a large, heaped-up, all-attractive fire".[1] Our familiar grates for economizing coal are quite a modern invention; the old English Christmas fire blazed upon a wide open hearth, as it still does where wood or peat is the fuel most in vogue. In preparation for the festival a huge log was selected beforehand, as large as the firedogs would conveniently sustain. In some places it was the whole trunk of a tree which had been selected at Candlemas. In Scotland it was commonly a piece of a birch tree, stripped of its bark and dried beforehand; whence the proverb, used for one who was extremely poor, "He's as bare as a birk on Yule e'en". The Yule Log[2] was sometimes brought home with considerable ceremony; drawn with ropes by many willing hands, it being thought—or at least said—that all who helped were thereby insured against witchcraft for the ensuing year. Herrick sings

"Come, bring with a noise,
My merry, merry boys,
The Christmas log to the firing;
While my good dame, she
Bids you all be free,
And drink to your heart's desiring.

[1] The familiar association of Christmas with severe weather is a tradition inherited from the years before the rectification of the Calendar. Christmas, old style, coincides approximately with Epiphany, new style, when the temperature is usually lower than at new style Christmas. Similarly the old May Day corresponds with 13th May of our modern reckoning when we may generally "go a-maying", or even sing "Somer is ycomen in" without any serious feeling of incongruity.

[2] In Cornwall it was commonly called "The Mock".

" With the last year's brand
Light the new block, and
For good success in his spending
On your psalteries play,
That sweet luck may
Come, while the log is a-teending."

n Provence the whole family go out on Christmas ve to bring in the log, which should be cut from a fruit ee. The bearers walk in line, the eldest foremost and ie rest in order of seniority. A carol is sung, praying r fertility in field and fold, house and vineyard. The ungest child pours wine on the log " in the name of ie Trinity ", and it is then thrown on the fire. In rance it was sometimes four feet long; it was always ndled at one end, and replaced on the hearth every ening until consumed or till Twelfth Night. If any f it still remained it was carefully preserved as a arm against lightning, and against chilblains during at winter. In Normandy, before the Revolution, it as usual to extinguish the household fire, and kindle ie log with a flame procured from a lamp in the earest church. Sometimes, when the log was duly laced, and before it was kindled, the prettiest girl in ie company was seated on it, and her health drunk y all present. In other places the children were arned not to sit on the log lest they should catch the ch. Another strange custom was to chalk a rude gure of a man on the log before it was ceremoniously ghted. One would think this must have been a dim miniscence of human sacrifice in heathen times. In any places the presents for the children were arranged n the Yule log. Almost everywhere the custom was

that a remnant of the log should be reserved to kindle the new log next Christmas. Sometimes the remnant was kindled afresh on Candlemas Eve, and after blazing awhile was quenched, and preserved as a charm against fire and other misfortunes. Akin to this was a custom in the Netherlands of kindling a splinter of fir wood, quenching it when half-burned, and placing it under the bed as a charm against lightning. In Brittany it is still usual to light the log—always with a brand rescued from last year—at the moment when midnight sounds from the church tower. The very widespread practice of kindling the new log with a remnant of the old seems like the survival of an ancient Celtic notion of a perpetual sacred fire; of which we have more definite illustrations in Ireland.

A very common superstition is that, unless the maids wash their hands before touching the log, the fire will burn dull. In some parts of Yorkshire it was thought that a squinting or barefooted person would bring ill luck, if he came in while the log was burning. Many northern and western customs appear to favour the view that the Yule log is a survival from the Norse men; among whom, it is said, the Yule fire burned in honour of Thor, and was maintained with logs of his tree, the oak.

The Yule log is an important matter in Dalmatia, Croatia, and Serbia. Not Christmas Eve, but Christmas morning, is the time of its cremation. The tree or several young trees, are felled before sunrise with some ceremony; corn being thrown on them, with the words "Good morning, Christmas!" As they are carried in, lighted candles are held on each side of the

oor; and as the housefather enters with the first log, orn or wine is thrown on him by one of the family. ometimes the girls adorn the log with leaves and owers, or with red silk and gilt wire. Sometimes corn nd wine are poured on it, and a plough-share and an range set upon it, " that the corn may grow well and he beasts be healthy ". It is arranged beforehand who, *ot* of the family, shall first enter the house. He comes arly in the morning, and shakes corn out of his glove n the threshold, saying, " Christ is born ". One of he family sprinkles corn upon him, saying, " He is orn indeed ". (These phrases, it scarcely needs to e said, are the regular Christmas salutation and reponse.) The visitor then beats the log to make the parks fly, and utters a wish for good luck to the houseold and their farm. Possibly in its origin this cerenonial may have been a solemn rekindling of the acred hearthfire, the centre of the family life, and welling-place of the ancestors. It certainly seems omewhat heathenish.

It must always be remembered that the Yule log, ith all its archaic and sentimental associations, belongs xclusively to the open hearth. The modern apology, billet the size of a quartern loaf, set on the top of a oal fire in a modern grate, is about as much like he genuine Yule log as a horse-chestnut is like a hestnut horse. Still, at Ripon, and probably elsehere, coopers were wont to dispose of useless knotty locks by giving them to customers to serve as Yule ogs. If anything of these was left it was consumed n old Christmas Eve. Brand, writing in 1777, tells s that in the north of England a very large block

of coal was often set apart as a substitute for the Yule log.

In Devonshire and Somerset cottages an ashen faggot takes the place of the Yule log. The origin of this was accounted for by a pretty legend. When the shepherds came through the snow to Bethlehem they found the Holy Family suffering from the cold. So the youngest of the shepherds went out and gathered a bundle of ash sticks wherewith to kindle a fire; ash being, it is said, the only wood that will burn freely while green.

Another explanation of the custom relates it to a vague story of King Alfred during his sojourn at Athelney. But considering that the ash was held sacred by the Danes and Norsemen, who were still heathen when the Saxons of Somerset were at least nominally Christian, we are disposed to associate the ashen faggot with the mythic Ash Yggdrasil of the Eddas; by which the world was sustained, the roots of which went down to hell, while its branches soared to heaven. To burn the sacred ash on Christmas Eve might well be a symbolic repudiation of heathenism. As with the Yule log so with the ashen faggot; a remnant should always be reserved to kindle the fire in the following year.

In some places the ashen faggot was associated with a custom which is now, we may hope, generally obsolete. The faggot, of huge size and having nine bands, was kindled on the wide hearth of a farm house, or public house kitchen; the men sat around, and as each band of the faggot gave way, a fresh quart of cider was brought in. If anyone retired, being overcome by the heat, he was expected to pay for another quart or

D 287

BRINGING IN THE YULE LOG, PENSHURST PLACE, KENT

After Joseph Nash.

An old-time scene in a great feudal hall showing the ponderous block being hauled into the house with much shouting and laughter.

der by way of penalty. In short, like many other ld drinking customs, it was a competition who could nbibe the greatest quantity of liquor without be- oming helplessly intoxicated. A less objectionable ustom was to associate each of the nine bands with ne names of a pair of lovers. The jest was that ney whose band was first burnt through would first e married.

If by any chance the Christmas fire should go out, nat would be very unlucky; especially when lucifer natches were unknown, and tinder-boxes rather a rity. For in many places, particularly in the north f England, nobody would oblige another with a kind- ng at Yule. It was deemed unlucky that any light nould leave the house from Christmas Eve till New ear's Day. The fire, therefore, was kept constantly urning, and on this account, at Cleobury Mortimer Salop) the Curfew Bell was not rung during the hristmas season. In some places a bonfire was made n some open space, and kept burning from Christmas ve till the New Year, so as to be available in case of nergency. In other places, on the contrary, the cus- om, was *not* to light a fire on Christmas Day *except* ith fire borrowed from a neighbour's house. This eems related to the notion of a perpetual sacred re.

The ashes of the Christmas log were supposed to ive fertility to the ground, to rid cattle of vermin, to ure toothache, and to protect the house from fire and l luck. But to throw them out on Christmas Day ould be nothing short of criminal; it would be " throw- ng ashes in the Saviour's face "!

32. CHRISTMAS CANDLES

In a carol of the earlier half of the nineteenth century we read:

> " Then be ye glad, good people,
> This night of all the year,
> And light ye up your candles;
> His Star is shining near."

Christmas candles can claim a high antiquity. The Jews, at their yearly " Feast of Lights ", in addition to the lamps or candles necessary for illumination, set up many others in honour of the feast; and when our Christian ancestors transferred the name from the feast of Dedication to that of the Nativity, they took over this custom also. It seems to be alluded to by Tertullian, in a passage already quoted, in which he denounces the festal use of lamps as pertaining to heathenism. It was usual all through the Middle Ages to set up on Christmas Eve, both in church and hall, one very large candle in remembrance of the Star of Bethlehem; or perhaps in remembrance of the words of Simeon, who spoke of the Holy Child as " A Light to lighten the Gentiles ". In the buttery of St. John's College, Oxford, there is—or was—a large stone candlestick ornamented with the Holy Lamb, and specially reserved for this purpose. In Scotland, before the Reformation, if the great Christmas candle went out before midnight, it was thought to portend some great calamity to the family. If it continued to burn, then some time after midnight it was extinguished, and the remnant carefully preserved to be used at the " lyke-

wake ", i.e. death-watch—of the head of the family.

In Ireland the Yule log is little regarded; but the Christmas candle is of great importance. It is of large size—sufficient to serve for New Year's Eve and Twelfth Night. If there is not a candlestick big enough to receive it, some homely substitute is contrived—perhaps fashioned out of a large turnip. Before lighting, it is decked with holly, or with coloured paper cut in fantastic patterns. A similar custom is said to exist in Finland, and in some parts of Germany.

Early in the last century it was customary in Lancashire villages for the children, on the day before the holidays, each to bring a candle to the schoolmaster. And within living memory grocers and chandlers used regularly to give large Christmas candles to their customers or their children; a fashion which only died out as " dips " and " moulds " gave place to improved methods of illumination. In a colliery village near Oswestry (Salop), early in the last century, it was customary in the evenings of Christmas week to carry about the street boards covered with clay, in which were stuck lighted candles. This custom was confined to the colliers; its origin and meaning seem to be quite forgotten.

In Norway it was usual on Christmas Eve to arrange all the silver and polished pewter in the house so that the light of the Christmas candles should shine on it, as if in benediction. In West Jutland *two* large candles were lighted, to represent the householder and his wife; whichever of them burnt the longer, it was supposed that its representative would outlive the other. Usually in all the Scandinavian countries the Yule candle had

to burn all through the night, until the sun arose: it should then be extinguished by the father or the oldest member of the household. The remainder of the candle was smeared on the plough, or used to make the sign of the cross on the cattle, or given to the poultry, or in some other way used as a charm against ill luck.

33. THE CHRISTMAS FEAST

Let us now suppose that we have hung up the holly and ivy, not forgetting the mistletoe; we have listened to the waits and the carol singers, laughed at the mummers, and paid the usual toll to the Wassail Bowl. We have lent a hand toward bringing home the Yule log, eaten our carp or herring salad, laid up all needful provision in our own modest larder, and duly responded to the call of the Christmas bells. And now, it may be, we are accepting an invitation to dine at the Great House of the village. Abraham Lincoln is reported to have said that " he thought the Creator had rather a liking for the Common People, He made so many of them ". But the creators of Christmas literature seem in general to be otherwise minded; for in almost every literary or poetic description of a Christmas feast from an earlier pen than that of Dickens, it is the feast of the Palace, the Castle, or at least the Manor House—where the squire and his worthy dame keep open house throughout the festive season. No doubt here, as elsewhere " distance lends enchantment to the view ". Indisputably the " good old times " as pictured for us by Herrick and Wither, Walter Scott and Washington Irving, have a sort of glamour which

makes us wish they could be recalled; but if we were able to do so it is likely we should find the price more than we were willing to pay. Sir Roger de Coverley and Lady Bountiful were excellent people in their way; " take them for all in all we shall not look upon their like again ". But they believed with all the assurance of religious conviction in the divine right of the landlord " to determine who should be associated with him in the cultivation of the soil "; and if, in those good old days, tenant or labourer had so much as dreamed of thinking for himself, or voting against the squire, or saying his prayers otherwise than according to the Act of Uniformity, the very least he could have looked for would have been to be set down for a Puritan, who could have no possible interest in Christmas or any of its festivities.

The ideal English Christmas, to which the fancy of later generations looked longingly backward, was that of Queen Bess or James I, before Puritanism had grown strong enough to be troublesome. To such a Christmas feast let us transport ourselves in imagination. The hall is decked with holly, picturesquely stuck among the antlers and old armour that are its usual adornments. The remains of the Yule log are still discernible on the hearth; the guests are seated at the long tables, with strict regard to social rank. A sound of music is heard outside, the jester gambols in with some extravagant antic, and all the company rise in honour of *The Boar's Head*, carried by the chief cook on a silver dish, wreathed with bay, having in its mouth a lemon or a roasted pippin, and in its ears sprigs of rosemary. It is closely followed by the minstrels, and as many of

the upper servants as can be mustered, carrying the subsidiary dishes, and the procession moves slowly up to the high table, singing the never-to-be-forgotten carol:

" The Boar's Head in hand bear I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary;
And I pray you, my masters, be merry,
Quot estis in convivio.

" The Boar's Head, as I understand,
Is the chief service in this land;
Which thus bedecked with a gay garland,
Servite cum cantico.

" Our steward hath ordainèd this
In honour of the King of Bliss,
Who this day to be served is.
In Reginensi Atrio.

Caput apri defero,
Reddens laudes Domino.[1]

The ceremonial bringing in of the Boar's Head, with music, is a custom of great antiquity. It is distinctly recorded as having been performed " according to the manner " at a royal banquet in 1170. Of its meaning something will be said hereafter. As to the subordinate dishes, here is a rhyming list from a MS. of the fifteenth century. If of no other interest, it tells

[1] This is the form in which the carol has been regularly sung at Oxford for the last two hundred years. The older recension, printed by Wynken de Worde in 1521, gives the third verse as follows:

" Be glad, lords, both more or less,
For this hath ordained our steward
To cheer you all this Christmass,
The Boar's Head with mustard."

There are several other Boar's Head songs, ranging from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century; but they are of little interest. The older ones are mere doggerel; and the later ones, with allusions to Ceres and Bacchus, Meleager, the Calydonian Boar &c., have nothing in common with genuine folk-song; they are simply academical jokes.

us what in those days was accounted good eating:

" Then comes the second course with great pride;
The cranes, the herons, the bitterns by their side,
The partridge, the plover, the woodcock, and the snipe;
Larks in hot ' schow '[1] for the ladies to ' pyke ';
Furmety for pottage and venison fine;
Umbles of the doe, and all that ever comes in;
Capons well baked, and knuckles of the roe,
Raisins, and currants, and other spices mo';
Good drink also, luscious and fine,
Blood of Allemaine, Romnay, and wine."

Swan was a standard dish in great houses at Christmastide; according to the Duke of Northumberland's *Household Book*, 1512, five swans were dished for Christmas Day, three for New Year's Day, and four for Twelfth Day. A peacock was a favourite Christmas dish of old time—skinned before roasting, reclothed with his own feathers, and the beak either gilded or holding a sponge saturated with blazing spirit. The custom was that the peacock should be brought in, not by a servant, but by the most distinguished lady of the company. He was, confessedly, dry meat, and was served with abundance of gravy; though we venture to doubt the story of three fat wethers being needed to make gravy for one peacock. Turkey first appears as Christmas fare in 1524. Bustard continued to figure in Christmas menus till the end of the eighteenth century; but the bird has since become practically extinct in England.

Profusion, rather than refinement, was characteristic of those old Christmas feasts. In 1248, when King Henry III was keeping his Christmas at Winchester, he

[1] ? sauce

ordered his treasurer to fill Westminster Hall with poor people, and feast them for a whole week. Richard II was even more prodigal in his Christmas feasting. When Westminster Hall was enlarged and embellished, he provided 28 oxen, 300 sheep, and game and fowls without number; feeding 10,000 guests during several days. One old writer, John of Salisbury, tells of a Christmas feast that began at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and ended at midnight; when delicacies were brought from such remote places as Constantinople, Syria, Egypt, and Babylon. Here is a bill of fare about the year 1560 or 1570, including sixteen principal dishes; (1) a shield of brawn with mustard; (2) a boiled capon; (3) a boiled piece of beef; (4) a chine of beef, roasted; (5) a neat's tongue, roasted; (6) a pig, roasted; (7) chewets,[1] baked; (8) a goose, roasted; (9) a swan, roasted; (10) a turkey, roasted; (11) a haunch of venison, roasted; (12) a pasty of venison; (13) a kid with a pudding in the belly; (14) an olive pye; (15) a couple of capons; (16) a custard or dowset. Sixteen other dishes were made up of salads, fricassees, devised paste, and sundries.

"The Roast Beef of Old England" has been for ages the *great* Christmas fare. The legend of "Sir Loin" knighted by Charles II is no doubt apocryphal, though the table on which the ceremony is said to have been performed still exists in several places to vouch for it. But a baron of beef, i.e. two sirloins, not cut asunder, but joined by the end of the backbone, is still roasted for the king's table every Christmas Day.

As to what may be called the accessories of the old-

[1] Probably a kind of savoury mince-pie.

time Christmas feast; bread, of course, goes without saying, and there must have been some provision of roots and pot herbs, as beet, carrots, coleworts, parsnips, salsafy, skirrets, and turnips. Potatoes were only introduced in 1586, and were a rarity till after the Restoration. The "furmety" or frumenty of the old rhyming bill of fare (p. 119), according to the oldest formula now extant, was wheat boiled till the grains burst, and when cool strained and boiled again with broth or milk and yolks of eggs. This was the legitimate accompaniment of fat venison or fresh mutton.

In more recent times frumenty was a mawkish concoction of stewed wheat, boiled up with milk, raisins, sugar, and spices. It was lately, and perhaps still is, the regulation Christmas Eve supper in many rural parts of Yorkshire. Elsewhere it was the first thing taken on Christmas morning; ale posset being the last thing drunk on Christmas Eve. In Shropshire the custom was that every farmer should set aside a sack of wheat for the poor; from which on St. Thomas's Day his wife or daughter doled out a pint or a quart to each comer, according to their poverty and the size of their family. This was to make frumenty for the Christmas feast. The custom survived here and there till about 1870; but generally before that time the farmers gave money to the parson instead, to provide clothing for the poor. The aforesaid frumenty was probably an early stage in the evolution of what afterwards became plum porridge; and this in turn, about 1670 or a little earlier, stiffened into plum pudding. That plum porridge was indeed fearfully and wonderfully made. One of its simpler forms was beef or

mutton broth, thickened with brown bread; half-boiled raisins, currants, prunes, mace, and gingerbread were added; and when thoroughly done the mixture was served in a semi-liquid state. Another recipe is to boil beef and veal with sack, old hock, and sherry, lemon and orange juice, double-refined sugar, raisins, currants, and prunes; add cochineal, nutmeg, cinnamon, and cloves; the whole to be thickened with brown bread and served in a tureen. This delectable mess was served at St. James's Palace as late as 1806, possibly later. Sir Roger de Coverley is made to say (*Spectator*, No. 269) that he had hopes of a " rigid dissenter " when he saw him enjoying his plum porridge. In these various recipes prunes, i.e. plums, form an essential part. Gradually they seem to have been supplanted by raisins, &c., so that a plum pudding may be defined as a pudding without plums—*lucus a non lucendo*. A more serious misnomer is current in rural parts of Somerset; where raisins are commonly called figs (a real fig is a " doat-fig "), and our customary Christmas treat is " figgy pudding ".

But what of the Christmas pie? That was also a marvellous concoction, in the true etymological sense of the word. Here is a recipe—wording modernized—from a MS. written in 1394. " Take a Pheasant, a Hare, a Capon, two Partridges, two pigeons, and two Conies; chop them up, take out as many bones as you can, and add the livers and hearts, two kidneys of sheep, force-meat made into balls with eggs, pickled mushrooms, salt, pepper, spice, and vinegar. Boil the bones in a pot to make good broth; put the meat into a crust of good paste ' made craftily into the likeness of a bird's

body '; pour in the liquor, close it up, and bake it well; 'and so serve it forth, with the head of one of the birds at one end and a great tail at the other, and divers of his long feathers set cunningly all about him '."

The Christmas pie of Herrick's time was filled with neats' tongues, chicken, eggs, raisins, orange and lemon peel, sugar, and various spices. It is not difficult to imagine the stages of evolution, or devolution, by which this eventuated in our modern mince pie. And in like manner we may well believe that the same ancestry, with somewhat different environment, gave birth to the renowned squab pie of Cornwall. But we must pause here; else we shall be led on to treat of mackerel pie, maggoty pie, and so many others that they say " the devil dares not show himself in Cornwall, lest he should be baked in a pie ".

In Hone's *Table Book*, vol. II, p. 506, the following is quoted from the *Newcastle Chronicle* of 6th January, 1770: " Monday last was brought from Howick to Berwick, to be shipp'd for London, for Sir Hen. Grey, Bt., a pie the contents whereof were as follows, viz., 2 bushels of flour, 20 lbs. of butter, 4 geese, 2 turkeys, 2 rabbits, 4 wild ducks, 2 woodcocks, 6 snipes, and 4 partridges, 2 neats' tongues, 2 curlews, 7 blackbirds, and 6 pigeons. It was made by Mrs. Dorothy Patterson, housekeeper at Howick. It was near nine feet in circumference at bottom, weighs about twelve stones, will take two men to present it to table. It is neatly fitted with a case and four small wheels."

This may serve for the Christmas feast of what people will persist in calling " the good old times "—

the times of semi-starvation for the many and of riotous luxury for the few. We appreciate them most highly as we look backward through the mist of ages, and fancy ourselves at the festive board—of course " above the salt "—while the minstrels played and sang, and the jesters cracked their smartest jokes, and perhaps the celebrated " Dance of Fools " was performed. The reckless profusion had one redeeming feature; there would be an enormous overplus of broken meat, which on the following day would be distributed among the poor. In this sense it was quite a pardonable exaggeration to say:

> " A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
> The poor man's heart for half the year."

It may be remarked that *sometimes* these old Christmas feasts borrowed the one commendable element of the older Roman Saturnalia, and set forth for once in the year the Brotherhood of Humanity. It was not merely that

> " The heir, with roses in his shoes,
> That night might village partner choose."

It was not unusual for country squires of the better class to keep open house for all comers during Christmas time, " when minstrels and dancers flocked to the hall, and crowds enjoyed right good fare ". We read of one, John Carminow, in Cornwall, who used to do this during the whole twelve days of the feast; providing for his guests 12 fat bullocks, 36 sheep, 20 Cornish bushels of wheat, with hogs, lambs, and fowls of all sorts. Still better, at Penshurst, the home of the

Sidneys, in Queen Elizabeth's time, the distinctions of rank and fortune were provisionally laid aside; rich and poor equally shared the squire's bounty; no great salt-cellar divided the noble from the ignoble guests, and the dishes did not grow coarser as they receded from the high table. No wonder that in such cases the Christmas feast became a bond of union between all classes, and begat friendly relations between lord and peasant, which were not easily disturbed. It was well, surely, that not only from the pulpit but also from the festal board this gospel should be annually proclaimed, that He whose birthday was kept with joy and hallowed mirth was born to be not only " King of kings and Lord of lords ", but, as St. Francis had taught long before, to be " Little Brother of all Mankind ".

During the latter half of the eighteenth century the increasing prosperity of the nation, and improved means of conveyance, led to a great increase of travelling, especially among the wealthier classes. A natural result was a great increase and general improvement of inns, which at festive seasons like Christmas made ample provision for expected guests. Hone (*Table Book*, II, 43) gives the Christmas Bill of Fare of the " Bush " Inn at Bristol for the year 1800. It numbered 150 items, including, besides beef, mutton, lamb, veal, pork, and venison in every conceivable variety, hares, rabbits, 39 sorts of birds, 16 sorts of fish, 3 of shellfish, 10 kinds of soup—including turtle, boar's head, pies of various kinds, mince pies, jellies, &c.; but, strange to say, there is no mention of plum porridge or plum pudding.

What has here been said about feasting has, no doubt, a distinct reference to the old English Christmas. But wherever, throughout the world, the festival of the Nativity is observed, feasting has a conspicuous place in the programme; and often, as is surely fitting, the feasting gives occasion for generous hospitality. In Serbia, for example, it has long been the custom for every well-to-do family to keep open house for three days; and all comers—friend or enemy, stranger or beggar—are welcome to a place at the table.

34. THE BOAR'S HEAD

We must revert for a moment to the " Song of the Boar's Head ", already quoted. We have called it a carol, and such it is in the strictest sense of the word. It is moreover the oldest *printed* carol in existence, having been printed by Wynkin de Worde in 1521. Various are the explanations that have been given of the prominence of the boar's head at the Christmas feast; and all, except those which are manifestly mere jokes, are more or less of a religious character. According to the law of Moses the swine was an unclean beast; and from the time of the Maccabees or earlier the eating of swine's flesh by a Jew was deemed a formal act of apostasy. It has therefore been suggested that its introduction at the Christmas board was a trophy of emancipation from the old law; Christ having made all meats clean, so that on His birthday Christians might freely eat that which was forbidden to the fathers.

Others say that we have here a survival from the

old Norse folklore. The Boar Saehrimmer furnished the daily meal of the heroes in Walhalla, and on earth his kindred furnished the staple of a feast in honour of Odin. His counterpart may be found in the everlasting pig of the pagan Irish paradise, who furnished the immortal food of the gods.

Not only among the Jews, but also among the Egyptians, and all the Semitic peoples except the Babylonians, swine were held in abhorrence. The same is true of the Cretans, Arcadians, Galatians, and several other of the Celtic tribes, as also of the worshippers of Tammuz (or Adonis) everywhere, who according to the legend was killed by the tusk of a wild boar. By the Irish and Welsh, on the other hand, swine were highly esteemed, pork being generally preferred to beef and mutton. Irish legends tell of monstrous swine being eaten at solemn feasts; and the strange wild story of "The Hunting of Twrch Trwyth" in the *Mabinogion* represents the ancestor or patriarch of all the pigs as coming to Wales from the country of the gods. Yet there seems to have been some tradition of evil associated with them; for until quite recent times, in several parts of Wales, a familiar name for the devil was "The Crop-tailed Black Sow", *Yr hwch ddu gwta*.

There are numerous pig customs in various parts of Europe to which no religious significance can be attached, but which are still associated with the season of Christmas. In Germany a pig killed shortly before Christmas is partaken of on Christmas Day. Pig's head is one of the chief items at the Christmas Eve supper in Sweden and Denmark. Pig is the principal

Christmas dish in Roumania and Serbia; and in Russia pig's trotters were eaten at the New Year. These practices seem to be survivals from the Yule-tide feasting of prehistoric times, when " the Continental Celts were the pig-breeders and pork-curers of ancient Europe, and supplied Rome and the rest of Italy with bacon ". There may be some connection between them and the fact that in heathen times a hog was the usual sacrifice to Frey. In Sweden a favourite Christmas frolic was to represent this sacrifice in pantomime; the actors being disguised and their faces blackened, and the victim being dressed in a skin and holding a wisp of straw to represent the pig's bristles. The performance was accompanied with music and feats of agility. But none of these customs throws any light on the prominence given to the boar's head in the English Christmas feast.

In the story of Sintram the berserkers are represented as making vows on the boar's head. And although the whole story is pure romance—laid in an age when Christianity was still contending with the remains of northern paganism—it is difficult to think that Fouqué had not some tradition or legend on which to base the incident, and if so it might well be that the bringing of the head to table on Christmas Day was a symbolic renunciation of heathenism; men ate that by which their ancestors had sworn.

But perhaps the best explanation is furnished by the mediæval interpretation of the 80th Psalm; where Satan is " the wild boar out of the wood " who has long wasted the vineyard of the Lord. Now his head is carried in triumph as a testimony of his final defeat

by the newborn King; and the bearers chant, in a solemnly festive strain:

> " *Caput apri defero,*
> *Reddens laudes Domino*;"

hat is

> " I bear the boar's head,
> Rendering praises to the Lord."

The old solemnity of the boar's head is still regularly observed at Queen's College, Oxford; and it was several times presented at the royal table during the reign of Queen Victoria. The Oxford ceremony is thus described in Husk's *Songs of the Nativity*: " The head, the finest and largest that can be procured, is decorated with garlands, bays, and rosemary; it is borne into the hall on the shoulders of two of the chief servants of the college, and followed by members of the college and the college choir. The carol is sung by a member, usually a fellow, of the college, and the chorus by the choir, as the procession advances to the High Table; on reaching which the boar's head is placed before the Provost, who sends slices of it to those who are with him at the high table; and the head is then sent round to the other tables in the hall, and partaken of by the occupants."

At Hornchurch, in Essex, which is ecclesiastically related to New College, Oxford, the lessee of the tithes was accustomed yearly on Christmas Day to provide a boar's head, dressed and garnished. In the afternoon it was carried to a field adjoining the churchyard, where it became the prize of a wrestling-match. The winner carried it off to a public house, where he and his

friends feasted on it with all seasonable merrimer
Hone, writing in 1827, says this custom had lasted fro
time immemorial.

35. CHRISTMAS SPORTS

After the feast come the sports. The Hornchur
wrestling has already been mentioned. As a rule w
do not find much attention paid at Christmas to tho
" manly exercises " which were strenuously cultivat
at other seasons, such as shooting, leaping, and th
like; nor even to those which might be thought sp
cially seasonable, as curling or skating. The one exce
tion is football. In many parts of Wales great footb
matches were played on Christmas Day. After morni
service the whole population, male and female, of tw
adjacent parishes would turn out for a game, the goa
lying well within each parish; and the game w
played with such vigour that it sometimes degenerat
into a fight. It seems possible that these matches we
originally contests between two clans, or betwe
parties with different racial conditions. In Shetland th
men were accustomed to spend the greatest part
the short winter's day in football, not only on the actu
feast day, but throughout the whole twelve days
" the yules "; while the evenings were devoted
dancing.

There is one kind of Christmas " sport " which h
been customary in many places, which can only b
excused on the ground that it is the outcome of som
old-time superstition—probably a survival of some fo
gotten rite of heathen religion. This is the hunting

certain small creatures; in Suffolk squirrels and owls, and in many places wrens. Why squirrels and owls should be persecuted it is hard to say; but there are indications in folklore that a sacred character was once ascribed to the wren. Moreover, in several heathen religions we meet with the killing and (apparently) sacramental eating of sacred animals, in which some mysterious energy was supposed to be incarnated. We can well understand that a creature treated as sacred in heathen times would, when heathenism was discredited, be regarded with disfavour. Now it is said that the Druids took auguries from the varying note of the wren; wherefore in Derbyshire it was called "the Devil's bird"; and yet it was deemed unlucky to kill it. The one-time sacred character of the little bird seems to explain the nursery jingle, "Tommy Tit and Jenny Wren are God Almighty's cock and hen".[1] It appears that in many places the rustics did not distinguish between the two; or rather imagined that the Tit was the male and the Wren the female. This blunder may seem less astonishing if it be remembered that so educated a man as Oliver Goldsmith included the mole among animals of the rat kind; called tortoises and turtles crustaceous fishes; and made the porcupine a kind of superior hedgehog!

The original significance of the practice being forgotten, hunting the wren was usually accounted for by some ridiculous story. In the Isle of Man the story

[1] In several counties Cock Robin is substituted for Tom Tit in the nursery jingle. This naturally suggests the beautiful dirge in Webster's tragedy:

"Call for the Robin Redbreast and the Wren,
Since over shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men."

was that a malignant fairy or siren, assuming the shap of a beautiful woman, had lured many men to destruc tion; but at length she was so closely pursued by a avenging knight that she only escaped by taking th form of a wren; in which disguise she is hunted yea after year. The dead wren was sometimes kept as charm against shipwreck: at other times it was th subject of a mock funeral after Midnight Mass. Bu some of the ditties associated with the custom impl that the bird was formerly eaten. In Ireland the hunt ing was on St. Stephen's Day—the day after Christmas the story was that St. Stephen, hiding in a furze bush was betrayed to his enemies by a wren; so a customar ditty began " The wren, the king of all the birds,[1] wa caught on St. Stephen's day in the furze ". Anothe story was that during a rebellion in the north of Irelan a party of English were asleep, and would surely hav been slaughtered by Irish Papists, but were awakene by the noise of wrens dancing and pecking on a drum— for which they were denounced as " the devil's birds " Whatever the origin of the custom, the little bird wa hunted, and when killed was hung in a bush of holly and carried about by " Wren Boys " or " Droluns " who called at each house to levy contributions of mone or drink. If these were refused, the Wren Boys indi cated their displeasure by " rough music ". A simila custom of hunting wrens formerly obtained in som parts of France.

Usually, however, Christmas was the season fo good, honest play. It was the feast of the Holy Child and grave and reverend seniors made themselves chil

[1] Probably the Golden-crested Wren (*Regulus Cristatus*) is intended.

lren for the time. There would be dancing, of course; ever was there a genuine English merry-making without dancing, till pragmatical Prynne discovered that he lads and lasses who footed it to Sellinger's Round ere art and part with the daughter of Herodias, when he danced off John the Baptist's head. Then we read f blindman's buff, hot cockles, hunt the slipper, bobpple, forfeits, shoeing the wild mare, and fox i' th' ole. Shuffle-board, and games with cards and dice ere popular. A statute of Henry VII forbade apprences to play at cards, except during the Christmas olidays: and many who would not participate in ames of chance at any other time made an exception favour of Christmas.

William Lovel, Lord Morley, died in July, 1475. ine years later Margery Paston sent to inquire how s household kept the Christmas immediately follow- g his death. His widow replied that " there were none sguisings, nor harping, nor luting, nor singing, nor one loud disports; but playing at the tables, and chess, d cards; such disports she gave her folk leave to play, d none other " (see *Paston Letters*, No. 441).

One favourite sport of considerable antiquity, but ecially associated with Christmas Eve, is snap-dragon. quantity of raisins, or other dried fruit, is placed on broad, shallow dish, brandy is poured over it, and t on fire. The company in turn snatch the fruit out the blaze, to do which without being scorched needs me dexterity. It is usual to extinguish all the lights the room while the game is in progress.

36. MASKING

Among the upper classes it was not unusual Christmas time to present a *masque*, in which perso of the highest distinction did not disdain to take part. This appears to have been a new fashion intr duced in the time of Henry VIII, and to have reach its highest development under James I. A large numb of Court masques were written by Ben Jonson, w on the mechanical and scenic side was ably assisted the royal architect, Inigo Jones. One of the most n able of these was *The Masque of Christmas*, in whi there were twelve principal and thirteen or fourte subordinate characters. " First came *Father Christm* with two or three of his guard, and a drum beat before him. He wore a close doublet, round hose, lo stockings cross-gartered, white shoes, a high-crown hat with a brooch, and a little ruff; he had a long th beard, and carried a truncheon. Then came his t children, led in a string by Cupid, and each with suitable attendant. *Misrule* wore a velvet cap with sprig, a short cloak, and a great yellow ruff: his torc bearer carried a basket with a cheese and a rope. *Ca* had a red cap and a long tawny coat, with a flute har ing at his girdle: his torch-bearer carried a song-bo open. *Minced Pie* was neatly dressed as the cook wife: her man carried a pie on a dish, and a spo *Gambol* appeared as a tumbler, with a hoop and be his torch-bearer was armed with a ' cole-staff '[1] and blinding cloth. *Post and Pair*[2] had a pair-royal of a

[1] A staff on which to carry a cole or cowl, i.e. a tub with ears, to be carried on a between two persons.

[2] This was a card game resembling, if not identical with, what is now known as " Poke

in his hat; his garment was done over with ' pairs and purs ': his squire carried a box with cards and counters. *New Year's Gift* was like a serving-man, in a blue coat, with an orange, and a sprig of rosemary gilt on his head; his hat is stuck full of brooches, and his collar is made of gingerbread: his torch-bearer carries a ' marchpane ' and a bottle of wine on each arm. *Mumming* wears a pied suit with a visor: his torch-bearer carries a box, and rings it. *Wassail* is a neatly dressed maiden: her page bears a brown bowl, dressed with ribbons and rosemary, before her. *Offering* wears a short gown and carries a porter's staff: his torch-bearer goes before him with a basin and a wyth. Finally, *Baby-cock* is dressed like a little boy, in a fine long coat and a cap with ear-pieces, with bib, muckender, and a little dagger: his usher carries a great cake with a bean and a pease." With all due respect to the undoubted genius of " Royal Ben ", it must be owned that the speeches assigned to these characters are not worthy of his reputation; and the action, apart from the dancing, is mere buffoonery.

It has been thought that mumming was a mere degraded survival of masking; but it would rather seem from this description that masking is a later development and glorification of mumming.

37. THE LORD OF MISRULE

Stow, the antiquarian (died, 1605), tells us that ' Anciently there was in the king's house, wherever he lodged, at the Feast of Christmas, a ' Lord of Misrule, or Master of Merry Disport '; and the like also

was there in the house of every nobleman of honour or good worship, whether temporal or spiritual. Among them the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London had their several Lords of Misrule, ever contending, without quarrel or offence, who should make the most pastime to divert the beholder. These lords began their rule, or rather misrule, on All-Hallows Eve, and continued the same until Candlemas Day; in which space there were fine and subtile disguisings, masks, and mummeries, with playing of cards for counters, nails, and points, in every house, more for pastime than for gain."

The date named seems to give countenance to a conjecture that the " Lord of Misrule " was in some way an impersonation of the malignant power that was supposed to rule, or misrule, the " inverted year ", the season of storms, and frozen streams, and leafless trees; not, of course, the actual devil, but the spirit of winter, the blind god Hoeder, the touch of whose spear had slain " Balder the beautiful, god of the summer sun ". This, it may be said, is somewhat far-fetched; but it is certain that in those districts where the population contains a large Scandinavian element the Yule-tide merry-makings had a good deal of heathenism in them. In the north of Yorkshire, for example, it was usual in the early part of the seventeenth century to dance in church after prayers on Christmas Day, and throughout the holiday. A little earlier, in Queen Elizabeth's time, the Lord of Misrule and his crew are said sometimes to have invaded the the church, and thrown the service into confusion. In 1576 Archbishop Grindal issued certain " Articles of

D 287

CHRISTMAS REVELS: HADDON HALL, DERBYSHIRE

After Joseph Nash.

A scene in one of the Tudor mansions, which were well suited to the hospitable requirements of the time. The hall rang with the laughter and shouts of relations, friends, and retainers all bent on "keeping their Christmas holiday".

Inquiry " applicable to the whole Province of Canterbury. One of them was " Whether the minister and churchwardens have suffered any lords of Misrule . . . or any disguised persons or others in Christmas or at May-games, or any morris-dancers . . . to come unreverently into the church or churchyard, and there to dance, or play any unseemly parts, with scoffs, jests, wanton gestures, or ribald talk, namely in the time of Common Prayer ". Nine years later the Puritan John Stubbs wrote, in *The Anatomie of Abuses*, as follows: " The wilde heades of the parish, flocking together, chuse them a graund captaine of mischief, whom they innoble with the title of My Lord of Misrule. Then marche these heathen compaine towards the church and churchyard, their pipers pypyng, drummers thonderyng, their stumpes dauncing, their belles jyngling, their handkerchefes swyngyng about their heads like madmen, their hobbie-horses and other monsters skyrmishing amongst the throng; and in this sorte they go to the churche (though the minister be at praier or preachyng) dauncing and swyngyng their handkerchiefs over their heads in the church, like devilles incarnate, with such a confused noise that no man can heare his owne voyce. Then the foolish people, they looke, they stare, they laugh, they fleere, and mount upon the formes and pewes to see these goodly pageants solemnized in this sort."

It seems convenient to mention, in connection with these disorders, a Yorkshire custom of shouting 'Yule!" at the end of the Christmas morning service. This may explain the origin of a nonsense rhyme which can be traced back for several centuries,

but to which no rational meaning has ever been assigned

> " Yule, Yule, Yule,
> Three puddings in a pule,
> Crack nuts and cry Yule!"

In some towns and villages a master of the revel appears to have been publicly appointed to organiz the parish festivities. In great houses where a pro fessional jester was kept, the business was usuall assigned to him. In the colleges at Oxford (perhap also at Cambridge) the fellows appointed a member o the college, usually a M.A., to regulate the proceeding of the Twelve Days. In the Inns of Court his functio seems to have been rather to stimulate than to regulat He was called by various names; at Merton Colleg Oxford, he was " King of Christmas "; at Trinity h was " Emperor "; in many places he was " The Christ mas Prince "; but more commonly " The Lord o Misrule ", and in Scotland " Abbot of Unreason " He was somewhat analogous to the mock king of th Roman Saturnalia; his function being to organize th sports and keep up a continuous round of merrimen at least from Christmas Eve to Twelfth Night. H maintained a mock court, and assigned to each one a active share in the business of merry-making. In great house, or at court, he was well paid for his pains On one occasion Henry VIII paid £15, 6*s*. 8*d*. to hi Lord of Misrule; equal to at least £200 of our presen currency. At other times wealthy men seem to hav assumed the function at their own cost, for the enter tainment of the guild, society, or town in which the were specially interested.

In the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth century the Inns of Court appear to have arranged their Christmas festivities with a total disregard of expense. In 1535 a Mr. Francis Vivian, who was " Christmas Prince " of the Middle Temple, is said to have spent the equivalent of £2000 in this manner.[1] During the Twelve Days of Christmas he maintained all the state of an actual sovereign; dined daily in the hall under a " Cloth of Estate "; being saluted by his chaplains in church with three low bows; receiving petitions, which he handed to his Master of Requests; and finally conferring several mock knighthoods.

The following are the titles assumed by one who played Lord of Misrule before Queen Elizabeth in 1594: " The high and mighty Prince Henry, Prince of Purpoole, Archduke of Stapulia and Bernardin, Duke of High and Nether Holborn, Marquis of St. Giles and Tottenham, Count Palatine of Bloomsbury and Clerkenwell, Great Lord of the Cantons of Islington, Kentish Town, Paddington, and Knightsbridge, Knight of the Most Heroical Order of the Helmet, and Sovereign of the same."

The " merry disports " of the Elizabethan age were characterized by much splendour, boundless extravagance, a considerable amount of humour, and occasional cruelty. This is scarcely to be wondered at, in a time when cock fighting and bull baiting were quite usual pastimes, and bear baiting was deemed worthy of royal countenance and patronage. We have a detailed account of the daily feasting and merry-making by the

[1] This may seem incredible; but Hone tells us (*Year Book*, p. 1503) that in the ninth year of Charles I the four Inns of Court provided a Christmas masque which cost £2400.

members of the Inner Temple during the Twelve Days of one Elizabethan Christmas. On St. Stephen's Day, immediately before dinner, there was a pageant in the Hall in which various great officers of state were personated. These were attended by sixteen trumpeters and four drums and fifes, with other subordinates. When these great officers were seated at table, there came in " The Master of the Game in green velvet, and The Ranger of the Forest in green satin; each bearing in his hand a green bow and divers arrows, with each of them a hunting-horn about his neck, blowing together three blasts of venery ". These, having marched thrice round the fire (which was evidently in the middle of the hall), took their seats. Then came a huntsman with a fox and a cat in a net, and with them nine or ten couple of hounds; and forthwith the fox and cat were worried to death by the hounds with blowing of hunting-horns. After this " merry disport " the company proceeded to dinner.

More respectable, probably less costly, and certainly more conducive to honest mirth, was a pageant exhibited to the townsfolk of Norwich in 1640, by one John Gladman, or, by another account, Hickman. Being crowned as " King of Christmas ", he rode in state through the city, dressed forth in silk and tinsel, preceded by twelve persons habited as the twelve months of the year; and followed by " Lent, clothed in white garments trimmed with herring skins, on a horse with trappings of oyster shells, in token that sadness should follow, and a holy time ". In this way they rode through the streets, accompanied by many in grotesque dresses; some in armour, carrying staves, and occasionally

ngaging in mock combat; some as devils, chasing and ightening the children; and some in skin dresses, ounterfeiting bears, wolves, lions, &c., and endeavouring to imitate their voices. This is the latest Christmas ageant of which we have any detailed account prior the temporary ascendancy of Puritanism.

It is easy to understand that in an age when refinement was only to be found in a very limited section of ie upper class, when the manners of the common eople, however merry and picturesque, were on the hole extremely coarse, such organized revels would be t to degenerate into rude practical joking and horseay, and would generally tend to relax the bonds of cial morality. It is not, therefore, wholly surprising find a statute of the Scottish Parliament, passed in e year 1555, wherein " It is statute and ordained at in all times coming, na manner of person be chosen obert Hude, nor Littlejohn, Abbot of Unreason, ueen's of May, or otherwise, nouther in burgh nor landwart, in onie time to come ". Provosts, baillies, c., electing such personages were to lose their municipal freedom for five years; electors not in burghs to fined ten pounds and be imprisoned during the ueen's pleasure; " and the acceptor of sic-like office ll be banished foorth of the realm ".[1]

After the Restoration the Lord of Misrule seems have had a temporary resuscitation at the Inns of urt; Evelyn tells of being " invited to the solemn lery " at Lincoln's Inn on 1st January, 1662, and

[1] Sir Walter Scott narrates, in note H to *The Abbot*, that in 1561 the provost and two bailies Edinburgh actually sentenced James Gillion, a cobbler, to be hanged for acting the part Robin Hood in a pageant. John Knox, then in the height of his power, declined to inter-; and hanged the poor man would have been but for a forcible rescue, under circumstances ch amounted to a serious riot.

Pepys mentions the presence of the king there on th following day. But the revival seems only to have be transient.

Many defunct elements in the old-fashioned Chris mas we may view with sentimental regret. Some v may hopefully endeavour to revive, as we have alrea welcomed back the Queen of the May. But we w shed no tear over the Lord of Misrule or Abbot Unreason. Let him rest in peace:

> " If there were aught for us to wail
> 'T would be his resurrection ".

38. YULE-FIRTH: " UNTHRIFTY FOLK "

Before the Reformation there was in Scotland a the north of England a custom of great but uncert antiquity called " Yule-firth ", i.e. " Christmas Truce Where this prevailed no criminal prosecution could initiated in the week immediately preceding Christm and during the week next following all legal proceedi were temporarily suspended in honour of the fe

Of the extent to which Yule-firth was observed have no information; but something may be said in t connection of a strange custom at York, of which earliest definite mention is found about the time Henry VIII. On St. Thomas's Day the Sheriff ma proclamation at the pillory that, during the Twe Days of Christmas, all manner of thieves, gambl loose women, " and all other unthrifty folk be welco to the town, whether they come late or early, in rev ence of the High Feast of Yule "; on condition, ho ever, that they kept the king's peace and submitted

ertain police regulations. How long this custom sur-ived is uncertain; but a writer in the middle of the ighteenth century refers to it as " not long discon-nued ".

It would be pleasant if we could accept as historic ıe very beautiful symbolism which a lady has lately ead into the strange custom. Adopting the Neo-)ruidic idea that the parasitical mistletoe represents ıan in his dependence on God, she associates the ork invitation to all and sundry with the ceremonial lacing of mistletoe on the altar in the cathedral; and ees in it an object lesson that only when man lays imself on the altar as ready for sacrifice, can pardon, eedom, and true life be fully enjoyed. But it is more kely, we think, that the authorities at York were of pinion that by giving these " unthrifty folk " tem-orary security against arrest, they might the better e kept under observation, and their depredations uarded against. Municipal regulation of vice, however, ways has tended and always will tend to deterioration f public morals; and we can very well believe that ıe York proclamation, like the unseemly pranks of ıe Lord of Misrule, did much to prepare the way)wards the austerity of Puritan reaction.

39. CHRISTMAS GIFTS— SANTA CLAUS, ETC.

It seems only reasonable that the festival which)mmemorates the Supreme Gift of Divine Love should e a time for the interchange of gifts between kinsfolk nd friends, as well as of bountiful alms to the poor.

The customs and traditions relating to Christmas gift
are many and various; some superstitious, some merel
droll, and some instinct with poetic beauty. It may b
as well to begin with those associated with St. Nichola

Nicholas lived about the beginning of the fourt
century. He was Bishop of Myra, a coast town
Lycia, almost equidistant from the nearest points
Rhodes and Cyprus. Being rich, there was nothing h
liked better than helping people who were in distres
and being modest there was nothing he hated so muc
as being thanked for it. So it happened again and agai
that a poor family who were in desperate need woul
find a gold piece or a well-filled purse that came fro
nobody knew where. At length the secret benefacto
was discovered, and from that day to this, when peop
have received welcome gifts from unknown source
St. Nicholas has had the credit of it.

Moreover, St. Nicholas was regarded as the speci
patron of boys; the boy-bishop was elected on h
feast-day; and with good reason, if we may believe h
legend. A wicked innkeeper had murdered two boy
and, being as greedy as he was cruel, had salted the
down for pork. St. Nicholas, coming that way, inquire
for the youngsters, and was told that they had go
out. He suggested that if such were the fact the
mother was not aware of it, and promptly put th
matter to the test. Being a saint, of course, he po
sessed the power of working miracles; so he made th
sign of the cross over the pickle-tub, and out came th
two boys, as lively as ever, and none the worse f
their adventure. We may imagine the confusion of th
naughty vintner; and may hope that he was converte

y the miracle, and continued a good Catholic to the nd of his days.

In Holland and Germany the benevolent saint is miliarly known as " Santa Claus ". He was introduced to England as the secret dispenser of Christmas gifts the latter part of the eighteenth century. It is said at his familiar title was really imported from America, here it had already been naturalized by Dutch settlers. he suspending of a stocking as a receptacle for the pected gifts was accounted for by an absurd story at St. Nicholas, on one of his midnight expeditions, imbed on a roof, and dropped a purse down the himney; which, instead of falling on the hearth, fell to a stocking that was hung up to dry!

In the Black Forest (in Germany) the annual visit Santa Claus is preceded by that of Knecht Rupert, ho goes round the village in a frightful disguise, visit- g every house, and terrifying the naughty children his preternatural acquaintance with their various isdemeanours. He generally concludes with an inti- ation that Santa Claus will be merciful this time, t if they do not grow better by next year the con- quences may be unpleasant.

In Norway Santa Claus has so many presents to liver that he needs the assistance of his servant Kris ringle,[1] who conveys the delightful load over the roofs the houses in a reindeer sleigh, which runs so lightly cause it was built in Fairyland.

As St. Nicholas was the special patron of boys, St. ucy was the special guardian of girls. Her feast day is on 13th December (the shortest day of the un-

[1] The name seems to be a corruption of *Christkindlein*, i.e. " Little Christ-child ".

reformed calendar), on which day torch-light proce sions were held, schools were illuminated, and it w usual to shoot and fish by torchlight. St. Lucy was Sicilian maiden, martyred about the year 304. H legend is that a rejected suitor denounced her to t authorities as a Christian, whereupon she was torture had her eyes put out, and was put to death. Later a absurd stories arose from the custom of painting h as carrying her eyes in a dish!

In Switzerland Father Christmas, with jovial r face and white beard, and clad in a long furred rob marches round the village with his wife Lucy. S wears a round cap over her long plaits of hair, a sm laced bodice, and a silk apron. She distributes gifts the girls, while her husband looks after the boys.

In Sweden St. Lucy was personated by the prettie girl in the house, dressed in white with a red sas having on her head a wire crown covered with bilber twigs, in which were fixed nine candles. She we through the house at the first cock-crowing, a wakened all the sleepers, offering to each a cup coffee or sweet drink. When all were dressed, brea fast was taken in a room brilliantly lighted.

In the Boehmer-wald St. Lucy is a bogie, w appears in the form of a nanny-goat with horns; giv fruit to good children, and threatens to rip up t naughty ones. In Russia the gifts are credited to t Babuska, i.e. the Grandmother; an old woman wh when the wise men from the East inquired the wa wilfully misdirected them. According to another ve sion, each of them in succession urged her to go wi him to visit the new-born King, but she would n

go until she had finished her spinning. When, at length, her task was done, she would have followed them, but could not, for the snow had covered their tracks. By yet another account, when the holy family were going down into Egypt, she refused them hospitality. Whatever her fault was, she repented of her unkindness; and ever since has been trying to make amends by going round the world on Christmas Eve distributing gifts to all good children.

In Germany in the sixteenth century Christmas gifts for children were tied up in bundles, which contained "something pleasant, something useful, and something pertaining to discipline": for example, cake, sugar-plums, money, a garment, a book, pen, or paper, and always a twig, suggestive of the rod. They were supposed to be brought by "der Haus-Christ". In modern Germany the old tradition of *das Christ-kind* is often sadly perverted; He is actually personated, in a fashion wholly unlike the Child of Bethlehem; something between the Divine Infant and an angel, but more like a good fairy than either. He is often a tall child, probably a girl, with long fair hair, and dressed in white. In Alsace it is usually a girl, with a crown of gilt paper and lighted candles, having in one hand a silver bell, and in the other a basket of sweets. She is attended by *Hans Trapp*, in a bear-skin, with a long beard and a rod. He threatens the naughty children, who are saved by the intercession of *das Christ-kind*. Sometimes the attendant is *der Schimmel-reiter*, who on entering jumps over a chair, and dances with one of the girls. Meanwhile *das Christ-kind* makes the children recite a hymn or some verses of Scripture; if they do it well *Christ-*

kind rewards them with gingerbread; if badly he beat them with a bag filled with ashes. Then he and *Schimmel-reiter* dance and pass on.

In France and Germany the usual receptacle for Christmas gifts is a wooden shoe. If in the shoe a small faggot should be found, the recipient would understand that Santa Claus's verdict was " Not deserving ". But he would probably find some mitigation in the shape of a concealed packet of bon-bons.

In Sweden, as also in Pomerania and some other parts of Germany, a small and valuable Christmas gift such as a jewel or a ring, is made up into a large bundle the " Yule-Klapp ", which takes both time and labour to unpack. Stories are told, moreover, of ladies receiving a huge bundle from which, when opened, the donor himself emerged, like Cleopatra from the carpet—probably well assured beforehand that he would not be rejected.

In many parts of France " Noël ", the festival of good news, is personified, and the gifts are brought by Father Christmas himself. In other parts, especially in Brittany, they are directly ascribed to " Le Bon Jésus ", the Good Jesus, as in like manner in Germany the giver is *das Christ-kind*, the Christ-Child. And surely this is better than the fictitious Babuska, and Kris Kringle, and Knecht Rupert, and Santa Claus better, because truer; for is not the Holy Child the real giver of whatever is given in honour of His blessed Nativity? Children are naturally imaginative, and apt to fear whatever is not understood. So it has happened that parents have kept up the old fables until the children, though eagerly expecting the presents that

ere to be brought by the mysterious nocturnal visi-
nt, were afraid to sleep through dread of something
hostly. There was but one way to banish that fear;
amely, to annihilate the little romance, and convince
em that Santa Claus was really one whom they knew
uite well by the name of "Mother".

40. THE CHRISTMAS SHEAF

In Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Hungary there
a regular custom of setting a small sheaf of corn on
pole in the gable of the house or barn; and he would
e thought a very curmudgeon who would refuse the
rds their Christmas feast. The boys in Denmark say
It is for Santa Claus's white horse"; and this is
ggestive of what probably originated the custom.
here can be little doubt that it is a pre-Christian
rvival, and that the sheaf was at first intended for
din's horse Sleipnor.

But in the northern countries generally there is a
evailing notion that the lower animals ought to have
share in the Christmas bounty. St. Francis wished
e oxen and asses to have extra hay and corn at Christ-
as, "for reverence of the Son of God, whom on such
night the blessed Virgin Mary did lay down in the
ll between the ox and the ass". He thought that
All Creation" should rejoice at Christmas, and the
mb creatures had no other means of doing so.
ccordingly in Silesia wheat is given to the beasts on
hristmas Eve "to make them thrive". It was said
at "If wheat be kept in one's pocket during Christ-
as service, and then given to the fowls, they will

grow fat and lay many eggs ". This seems to belon to the large class of magical superstitions, according t which a blessing or a curse is conveyed by means c enchanted food or drink. In Norway there is usuall a great brewing beforehand of Yule ale, of which good portion is given to the cattle. This seems quite i the spirit of Francis. Even more so is a custom whic is not yet quite extinct in the west of England. O Christmas Day a double ration of provender is give to horses and other cattle " for luck "; and it is sai that if this were neglected misfortune would certainl follow. Akin to this is a custom in some parts of Ita and Spain of scattering grain on Christmas Eve as feast for the birds.

41. THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Nothing in connection with Christmas gifts is mo popular than the Christmas tree, with which, how ever, it is by no means certain that they were at fir related. Its origin is very obscure, " lost in the maz of antiquity ". Some folk-lorists think it had to d with the worship or invocation of the " spirit of veg tation ", and relate it to other ceremonial trees, suc as the May Pole, or the St. John's tree of the Erzg birge, around which the people danced at the summ solstice. Some associate it with a story of St. Bonifa (otherwise Winfrid of Crediton, an English missiona in Germany in the eighth century), who is said to ha cut down on a Christmas Eve a sacred oak, beneat which human sacrifices had been offered: as it fe a young fir tree seemed to appear miraculously beyon

t; and this, unstained with blood, the saint proposed
is a sign or emblem of the new faith. Others connect
he Christmas tree with an old legend about a mar-
vellous transformation of nature at the birth of our
Lord, when the rivers flowed with wine, and the trees
blossomed in the midst of ice and snow.

With this legend may be associated a custom in
Austria, Carinthia, and Tyrol; where boughs of cherry,
pear, or hawthorn are gathered early in December, and
put in water or wet sand indoors, that they may blossom
t Christmas. Akin to this may be what we read of in
London in the fifteenth century, when holm, holly,
vy, and bay were made into a standard tree on Corn-
ill. Half a century later " a tree of gold " appeared
n a Christmas pageant presented before King Henry
VIII. Although there is neither record nor probable
radition as to the origin of the Christmas tree, there
s a pretty German folk-tale on the subject that is
worth the telling. On a stormy Christmas Eve a
prester and his household had made fast the door,
nd gathered around a cheerful fire. By and by knock-
ng was heard outside, and the housefather, opening
he door, saw a little child, cold, hungry, and all but
xhausted. He was kindly welcomed, warmed and fed,
nd little Hans insisted on giving up his bed to the
tranger. In the morning the family were aroused by
he singing of a choir of angels; and, looking at their
nbidden guest, they saw him transfigured, for He was
one other than the Christ-Child. He broke off a
ranch from a fir tree, and set it in the earth. " See,"
said He) " I have gladly received your gifts, and this
My gift to you. Henceforward this tree shall always

bear its fruit at Christmas, and you shall always have abundance." There can be no need to elaborate the meaning of this story if we remember Who it was that said, " Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me ".

The Christmas tree, as we know it, is first met with in Germany about the time of Luther. Popular tradition, which though not corroborated by evidence is not therefore necessarily incredible, ascribes its introduction to the Great Reformer himself; but the earliest definite mention of it as an established custom is in an anonymous MS. dated 1605. It does not seem to have been generally common till far into the eighteenth century: it was sooner popular in Protestant than in Roman Catholic communities; and until quite lately it scarcely existed in some rural parts of Bavaria. Originally a purely domestic institution, it gradually found its way first into Protestant and then into Catholic churches; and at Munich it has even invaded the cemetery, where on Christmas Eve the graves are decked with holly and mistletoe, and sometimes a little Christmas tree with its gleaming lights.

Leisurely as was the progress of this pleasant custom by the middle of last century the Christmas tree had become almost universal throughout Germany. It was set up in almost every house, rich and poor, even where there were only elderly people. From thence it spread throughout the greater part of Christendom. It is said to have been adopted in Finland about 1800, and was known in Denmark and Norway in 1830. The very first Christmas tree in England is said to have been set up at Penshanger in 1829, by a German lady

'rincess Lieven. This was altogether an exotic, and he tree was only naturalized in England after it had een set up at Windsor Castle by Prince Albert in 1841. n the same year it is said to have been introduced into 'aris; and fifty years later, between 30,000 and 35,000 ees were sold in that city in one season. It seems oubtful if it was common in Bohemia or in Sweden uch before 1860: previously, in the last-named coun- y, it was customary to set up a bare pole outside the ouse, not very unlike the Asherah forbidden in the w of Moses. Since then the Christmas tree has ound a welcome in Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, ustria, Russia, and America; largely through German fluence, direct or indirect.

It is not difficult to conceive that the Christmas tree ay have been originally an embodiment of the Spirit f Vegetation, and may have been Christianized by sociation with the beautiful old legend of the Tree f Life. When Adam was dying, says the story, he nt Seth to the garden of Eden to beg for the Oil f Mercy. This he could not obtain; but the guardian erub gave him instead a sprig, or a seed, from the ree of Life, which he was commanded to plant upon s father's grave. He did so; and therefrom grew a ee which in after ages afforded the wonder-working d of Moses. Later it was cut down and cast away; t just because it had been thus rejected, it was taken and fashioned into the very cross on which our rd was crucified, and so became the Tree of Life deed.

That the Christmas tree was adorned with lights , or soon after, Luther's time is certain; how soon it

became the vehicle of gifts is more doubtful. To th day in Germany gifts of a utilitarian character are nev hung on the tree, but placed on a table beside it. Denmark, where the tree has become as popular as Germany, there is a pleasant custom that on returnin from church on Christmas Eve the whole famil including servants and visitors, join hands and marc round the tree singing carols. The favourite carol o this occasion is the old macaronic "A Child is born Bethlehem".

In some parts of Germany the tree is made typify the Stem of Jesse—the human genealogy of ou Lord. Adam and Eve stand at the foot; the serpe is twined round the stem; but at the top is a ligh brighter than all the rest—the Light of the World, th Seed of the woman who should bruise the Serpent head.

In recent years an interesting development of th old custom has appeared in America. In several citi a municipal Christmas tree has been set up in son open square or other public place, where it affords gratuitous entertainment for the poor.

Another modern American adaptation makes th tree a central feature in a distinctly religious servic The church is darkened, except for the dim light two candles on opposite sides. The psalm "Out the depths" (130th) is sung; and then various Messian prophecies are recited, each by a separate voice. A each recitation a taper is lighted on the tree, till th whole is illuminated. Then the Gospel narrative recited in like manner, each section being followed b a hymn or carol, treated as a solo, trio, or quarte

ıe service ends with a hymn sung by the entire con-
regation, and the recital of the words of our Lord,
I am the Light of the World, &c.". This Tree-
ighting service is said to have been introduced by a
inister who had seen something of a similar character
ı Spain. It seems very like a festal inversion of the
Tenebræ ", sung in Roman Catholic churches in the
Ioly Week.

Like many other foreign importations, the Christ-
ıas tree has often been sadly bungled by English
ɔmmercialism, and so completely robbed of its beau-
ful significance. The tree of bazaars and fancy fairs,
ith its load of toys to be *sold* off, or allotted to *purchasers*
numbered tickets, is about as unlike the real thing as
well could be. The very essence of the symbolism
that the glittering fruit is a gift, not a purchase;
ıd—which is not less important—that it rises over
ıe crib wherein lay the Babe of Bethlehem. For the
hristmas tree is the Tree of Life. Let it arise in its
ergreen verdure, bright with tapers, and bending
ɔwn with treasures to be—not sold—but given as freely
the grace of God. Let the Christmas angel appear
the summit, and at its foot the Manger, out of which
ows the unfading Tree. And so let the children learn
ɔm this beautiful object lesson, that all things bright
ıd sweet and precious are the Gifts of the Holy Child
sus.

42. THE CHRISTMAS SHIP

Closely allied to the Christmas tree is another old
erman custom, scarcely yet naturalized among us:
e *Christmas Ship*. Of its origin we have no account—

neither record nor tradition. In Greece, in heathe times, a ship was carried in procession in honour of th wine-god Dionysus; and still at Athens the waits carr about models of warships at the New Year, it is said i honour of St. Basil, whose feast is kept on 1st January and who is said to have set out on a voyage on that da But it is hard to say what Greek influence could hav operated in Germany in the early Middle Ages. Th association of a ship with Christmas, as the beare of precious things from afar, is indicated in the ol doggerel " I saw three ships come sailing by on Chris mas day in the morning ". This seems to have som genealogical relation to a sixteenth-century carol which a fragment runs:

" There came a ship far sailing then,
St. Michael was the steersman,
St. John sat in the horn;
Our Lord harped, our Lady sang,
And all the bells of heaven rang
On Christmas in the morn."

But these are faint and broken echoes of a nob original—that sweet carol which we owe to the gre mediæval mystic John Tauler of Strasburg (die 1361), and of which the Christmas ship, laden wit toys, is a visible embodiment:

" There comes a galley sailing,
With amplest cargo stored;
It bears God's Son most loving,
The Lord's Eternal Word.

" That galley, calmly floating,
Bears freight of priceless cost;

Love is the sail that wafts it;
Its mast, the Holy Ghost.

" The earth now holds the anchor;
The ship to land hath won;
God's Word our flesh hath taken,
To mankind comes the Son.

" In Bethlehem an Infant,
Born in a manger-stall,
He gives Himself to save us;
Then praise Him, one and all.

" And whoso seeks that Infant
With loving clasp to hold,
Must first with Him bear anguish
And sorrows manifold;

" And then, with Jesus dying,
Again with Jesus rise,
An heir of life eternal,
Where Jesus gives the prize."

43. CHRISTMAS BOXES

In taking leave of Christmas gifts, we naturally nk of the gifts to children at the Roman *Sigillaria*, l of the *Strenæ* offered to the Emperor, or exchanged ween private citizens on the Kalends of January. Men gave sweet things, that the year might be full sweetness; lamps, that it might be full of light; n, that wealth might flow in amain ": evidently a t of sympathetic magic to ensure a lucky New Year. s easy to see how a New Year's custom might be nsferred to Christmas; but not so easy to under-

stand why the seasonable gift should be expected the day following the feast, or why that day should called Boxing Day. Indeed there is no man living w certainly *knows*, though many have *guessed*, the ori and primary meaning of " Boxing Day " and " Chri mas Box ".

Most folk-lorists associate the words with the earth savings-box which had to be broken to release its hoa It is well known that servants and apprentices, espe ally London apprentices, used such boxes to coll those Christmas gifts which they deemed their leg mate perquisites. Naturally the box would be brok only when fully charged, i.e. when Christmas Day v past. An essayist, writing in 1621, says of a covet man " as an apprentice's box of earth, apt he is to t all, but to restore none till he be broken ". Anoth under date 1642, makes the same comparison, phras it thus: " like the Christmas earthen boxes of appr tices ". Wither alludes to the earthen box in t merry song of his which has furnished so many seas able proverbs; but he seems rather to be thinking savings accumulated in the past, and now made av able to *prepare* for the feast:

> " Our kitchen-boy has broke his box;
> And to the dealing of the ox
> Our honest neighbours come by flocks,
> Because they will be merry."

A hundred years later Henry Carey introduced same idea in his delightfully humorous ballad " Sally in our Alley ". He makes his London 'pren say:

" Oh, Christmas time is drawing near,
And then I shall have money;
I 'll save it up, and, box and all,
I 'll give it to my honey."

The earthen box for savings is still to be found in Holand, where it is commonly made in the shape of a pig, nd is called " The Feast Pig ". To break it unseasonbly is unlucky; almost a crime according to the ethics f the nursery.

Another explanation of the familiar phrase makes refer to the church alms-box, the contents of which ere not dispensed until the day after Christmas, which as therefore called Boxing Day.

Others say that the words have nothing to do with box of any kind; that they came hither with the rusaders, and are nothing else but the Arabic *Backeesh*, i.e. a gratuity. There is not much of history to upport this view of the matter; but one might almost e tempted to adopt it in view of the fact that of old—nd indeed not so very long since—every person who id or was supposed to have rendered any service to nother during the year looked for backsheesh at Christas, indeed regarded it as a right. Husk says: " Every ouseholder was duly waited upon by the postman, e lamplighter, the waits, the turncock, the parish eadle, the dustman, the parish watchman, and others ". n London the parish beadles, who usually exercised e function of town criers, were accustomed about hristmas time to distribute a list of the parish officers r the year, and other information, with an appeal to ublic generosity in doggerel rhyme more or less season-

able. Specimens of such " bellman's verses " are know
of date 1735; and one firm, Reynells of Piccadilly
afterwards of Little Pultney Street, continued to pro
duce them for at least 130 years. Husk tells us tha
" a heavy blow and great discouragement to the custo
of Christmas boxing among tradesmen has been give
by the growing practice of keeping the shops closed o
Boxing Day". No one, unless it were Mr. Scrooge befor
his conversion, would grudge a Christmas box to th
postman, the lamplighter, or the dustman; but it is
different matter when servants claim backsheesh fro
tradesmen who supply their masters, or clerks an
managers of retail traders expect presents from th
wholesale dealers.

Be that as it may, the best kind of Christmas bo
that which is most in accord with the genius of th
season, is one recommended as long ago as the days
Nehemiah: " Go your way, eat of the fat and drin
of the sweet, and send portions to those for who
nothing is provided ".

Before finally dismissing the topic of Christm
gifts, it may be well to mention the publication
seasonable gift-books, which for a century and a ha
have been growing, year by year, more and mo
luxurious. They were originally designed for childre
and were of a very simple character. The earlie
examples known are those issued by John Newbur
the famous bookseller of St. Paul's Churchyard,
1765; one of which is *The History of Goody Two-sho*
ascribed, on what seems to be satisfactory evidence,
Oliver Goldsmith.

D 287

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CARD (1846)

From a facsimile of the original design made by J. C. Horsley, R.A., for Sir Henry Cole.

44. CHRISTMAS CARDS, ETC.

It might seem like an oversight if nothing were said f the pretty social custom of Christmas cards, albeit hey are of quite modern origin. There must be many ged persons who can remember their first appearance; nd some, perhaps, have preserved specimens of the arliest issues. There is some uncertainty as to the ate when the *first* Christmas card was actually sent. ome ascribe the invention to Mr. W. C. T. Dobson, .A., who, it is said, in December, 1844, sent to a iend a sketch symbolizing the spirit of Christmas, nd in the following year designed another card, of hich he sent lithographed copies to numerous friends nd acquaintances. Others say that the initiative elongs to Mr. J. C. Horsley, who in 1846 dispatched card which is described as "an elaborate affair, howing two allegorical designs of clothing the naked nd feeding the hungry, together with a family group f three generations, quaffing wine". It was some time efore the cards were put on the market. Unless our emory is much at fault, they were first sold about 858 or 1859, and were not common till 1862. The arlier types were very simple: a cock-robin, or a sprig f holly or mistletoe, with a conventional greeting. ear by year they grew more and more artistic, until bout 1883 or 1884 they reached their acme of pictorial eauty and seasonable fitness. Nothing since has ever irpassed a triptych in the style of early Florentine rt, which was published about that time. In the centre as the Holy Family, with patriarchs and prophets

behind, the shepherds and mage-kings adoring in fro
singing angels overhead, and in the wings the apost
and other saints, typical of the Holy Catholic Chur
in all the ages. Since then there has been artistic decli
art becoming more and more subservient to the deman
of trade and the perpetual craving for novelty. T
individual greeting-cards have tended in the sa
direction. Year by year the colour-printers give
cards which from a merely decorative point of vi
are as beautiful as ever, but except for the letteri
most of them would be just as well suited to May D
or Michaelmas.

Space must be found for mention of an obsol
custom which arose in schools early in the eighteen
century. This was the production of "Christm
Pieces"—specimens of handwriting laboriously p
duced under the superintendence of the writi
master, to show what progress had been made by t
pupil in the last twelve months. Husk had a collecti
of these "Pieces", forming an almost unbroken se
from 1720 to 1840. They were on large sheets
superior writing-paper, with engraved borders, a bl
being left in the middle for the specimen penmansh
Husk says that the early engravings were often of c
siderable merit, but they became by degrees poo
and poorer. They were supposed to represent so
important event of the year, as a battle, a coronati
an earthquake, &c., or scenes illustrating rural spo
military exercises, Bartholomew Fair, and the li
Scripture subjects were sometimes adopted, but ra
at first. About 1805 colour was introduced, and ab
1820 it became general; Scripture subjects, too, s

inted other designs. From this time the engraving teriorated: respectable copper-plate gave place to re outlines as a guide to the colourist, and these to mmon woodcuts, and finally to ornate " Flourishes " m the pen of the writing-master. But long before y ceased to be sold, the use of these " Christmas ces " was discontinued in all schools of the better ss. The custom was dying out in the boyhood of present writer, who still remembers that its un-asant associations made the near prospect of the lidays more delightful.

FAMILY REUNIONS—THE CHILDREN'S DAY

Many of our social and domestic customs are a tural recognition of the *new order* which the Babe Bethlehem introduced into the world. There can ely be nothing worthy the name of a Christian cele-ation of the feast if it be not associated with the aring off of old scores, the payment—as far as pos-le—of our just debts, the forgiving of debtors who rough honest poverty are unable to pay, and the ing aside of old grudges and quarrels. Yet it is to feared that some of us have not quite outgrown need of that lesson which Dickens taught in the mortal *Christmas Carol* of 1843.

Then our *family reunions* tell very eloquently of the elation of human brotherhood by Him who " showed the Father ", and contracted a fraternal relationship th the whole human race.

And we feel, too, that Christmas is peculiarly the

Children's Day. One of our most genial humorists h touched a true chord when, personifying the day usual, he says:

" Christmas comes, he comes, he comes,
Ushered in with a rain of plums;
Hollies in the windows greet him,
Schools come driving post to meet him,
Gifts precede him, bells proclaim him,
Every voice delights to name him.

" Curtains, those snug room-enfolders
Hang upon his million shoulders;
And he has a million eyes
Of fire, and eats a million pies,
And is very merry and wise—
Very wise and very merry,
And loves a kiss beneath the berry.

" And he would have us, one and all,
Awake at his benignant call,
And all be wise, and all lay down
Strife, and jealousy, and frown,
And, like the sons of one great mother,
Share and be blest with one another."

In Norway there is a pleasant way of impressing n the children that it is their own day, the birthday f their own Divine Brother, by a custom which is e dently a Christianized survival of one that has b n already mentioned in connection with Christmas gho s. The ghosts in Norwegian farm-houses have long b n laid, but still the children do not go to bed on Chr - mas Eve. After supper, straw is laid down in the hou - place, and there the children sleep that night.[1] T y

[1] A good deal of superstition is, or was, connected with this " Yule Straw " It w u in the nesting-places of fowls to protect them from witches; or given to cattle, before d n them to summer pasture, as a charm against sickness or accident.

ıre thus reminded of the tender sympathy of the All-Father with the little children, even with the lowly and he poor. It is well for us to think of this; of the Holy Child, not merely as lying in the manger, or carried nto Egypt to escape from the cruelty of Herod, but as laying with the boys in the street of Nazareth, or among the chips and shavings in the carpenter's shop. t is well to sing, once a year,

> " Backward, turn backward, O years in your flight;
> Make me a child again, just for to-night."

46. MISCELLANEOUS CHRISTMAS SUPERSTITIONS, ETC.

Before passing on to the traditions and customs of he twelve days following Christmas, it will be con-enient to bring together a number of superstitions hat cannot easily be classified.

One of them is the widespread belief that as mid-ight ushers in the Holy Birth-tide the cattle fall on heir knees in honour of Him who lay in the manger. t is said that the Christianized Indians in America elieve that at the same time the deer kneel in worship f the Great Spirit. And it is an undeniable fact that attle often have been seen on their knees on Christmas ve. In Somerset this was referred to *Old* Christmas ve (5–6th January), when " the Master Ox lowed oftly three times, and then kneeled towards the anger ". It seems a pity to spoil a poetic legend with prosaic comment; but the simple truth is that *all* uminant animals, oxen, sheep, deer, camels, and the est, when arising from a recumbent posture, almost

always get first on their knees—or in other words " g
up hind legs first ".

Somewhat akin to the belief in the kneeling ox
is a tradition, current in the Greek Orthodox Churc
that on Christmas Eve all trees and plants, especial
those on the banks of the Jordan, bow in reverence
the Saviour. A man rode into Lydda shortly befo
midnight on Christmas Eve, and tethered his ass
a prostrate palm tree, which he supposed had be
blown down by the wind. In the morning the tr
stood erect, and the poor ass was effectually hanged
a plain proof that the Greek Calendar was right, a
the Reformed Calendar of the West entirely wrong.

A less pleasing superstition once prevailed in so
parts of England, France, and Germany. It was believ
that on this one night of all the year oxen were al
to speak. Many tales were said to have been overhea
when the oxen were talking, but " the listeners nev
heard any good of themselves ". The bovine utteranc
usually had something to do with sudden death.

In Scotland, before the Reformation, it was cust
mary to visit the byre and stable on Christmas Eve, a
there say an *Ave Maria* and a *Paternoster* to safegua
the cattle and horses from the evil eye. There w
also a pretty fancy that bees might be heard singi
in the hive on Christmas Eve.

Another old superstition was related to the *gambl*
which too frequently mingled with the Christmas sp
Kirchmeyer, describing the customs of his day in t
Roman Catholic parts of Germany, tells us that at t
midnight and early morning masses the people's off

ıgs were severally laid on the altar, and some

" The money still do watch
'hat first to altar comes, which then they privily do snatch;
'he priest, lest other should it have, takes oft the same away,
Vhereby they think throughout the year to have good luck in play ".

Other superstitions have to do with divination. ;reat importance used to attach to the day of the eek on which Christmas fell. From this was prog-osticated the prevalent weather, and the fruitfulness r unfruitfulness of the ensuing season, the fortunes of ıose born on that day, the recovery or death of those ho on that day fell sick, &c. An elaborate rhyming ıide on the subject is contained in one of the Harleian ISS. in the British Museum,[1] from which the ap-ropriate stanza is often quoted as a curiosity in the hristmas papers.

Another form of divination was distinctly funny. girl *knocked loudly at the sty door* on Christmas Eve; a great hog first grunted in reply, her predestined usband would be an old man; if it were a little pig, ıat gave promise of a young one.

A characteristic Yorkshire superstition about *First ootings* is probably not yet quite extinct. It relates to ıe person who first enters the house on Christmas Iorning. A woman or a girl is thought to bring ill ırtune; a man or boy usually brings good luck, but e must always bring something into the house, if it e only a sprig of holly, before anything is taken out. is also held that a dark-haired lad ensures better luck

[1] Harl. MS. 2252.

than one who is fair. This may be a trace of race antagonism, inherited from a time when the dark haired Briton was a more welcome guest than the fair haired Saxon. This explanation is favoured by another superstition, that *a flat-footed person* brings ill luck and it is said that, on an average, Welshmen are higher in the instep than Englishmen.

In Scotland nothing was to be taken out of the house on Christmas Day, unless as a present. Somewhat akin to this was the belief that the luckiest person in the house during the next year would be he or she who first opened the door " to let Christmas in ". The proper way to do it is to open the door wide, and say " Welcome, Father Christmas ".

The chirping of a *cricket* at Christmas was widely believed to portend good luck; but to bring into the house anything made of *leather* was very unlucky.

The Glastonbury Legend is well known. The story is that Joseph of Arimathea and his comrades, fatigued with their journey, sat down to rest on Weary-all Hill where Joseph set his staff in the ground. It took root and became a hawthorn tree; which always " blossomed at Christmas, mindful of its Lord ", until it was cut down by a Puritan in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Several trees, grown from the haws of the sacred thorn still flourish in the neighbourhood, and have the like virtue; only they bloom at Twelfth-tide, which proves that the Reformed Calendar is not yet accepted in Wonderland. The local form of the legend is that the trees, being already in bud, unfold their blooms at midnight on the 5–6th January, but after a short time

D 287

THE WASSAILING OF THE APPLE TREES

From an old wood-cut.

lose them again. Within living memory many persons nade a nocturnal pilgrimage to one or other of these oly trees, in hope to see the miracle. The simple fact s that about Glastonbury, as elsewhere, there is a umber of pink hawthorns the original stock of which as imported from the East, and which usually bloom n the winter.

A Yorkshire saying, probably not so much a superition as a kindly jest, is that " In as many houses as ou eat a mince pie in the twelve days of Christmas, so nany happy months you will have in the year ". One ning is certain, the more of the true Christmas spirit e cultivate the more happiness we shall enjoy all the ear round.

There is an Irish superstition that the gates of aradise are always open at midnight on Christmas ve; so that anyone dying at that moment enters at nce, without going to Purgatory. Grim stories are ld of persons who were obviously dying, and were ndly helped out of this world just at the critical oment.

In some places there was a notion that it was unky to be born on Christmas Eve; there was danger at the unfortunate wight would become a werewolf! s a counterpart to this we may mention a Scottish lief that " those born on Christmas Eve or Good riday have the power of seeing spirits, and even of mmanding them ".

Another quaint belief, in some mining districts, was at on Christmas Eve High Mass was sung by invisible oristers in the mine which contains the richest lode

of ore, and which was preternaturally lighted up f
the occasion. A strange survival of heathenism lo
persisted in some parts of Bohemia, and perhaps
not yet quite extinct. A portion of the Christmas fa
is thrown into the wells, as an offering to the springs
or more probably to the Guardian Spirit of the sprin
—as a safeguard against drought.

The last superstition we need mention here is th
of the *Christmas Angel*. It used to be believed th
every Christmas Eve a number of angels were sent fr
heaven, commissioned each to awaken an infant fr
its first sleep and carry it to Paradise, there to sing
carol in honour of the Christ-Child.

Christianity having had its cradle in the northe
hemisphere, it was inevitable that Christmas shou
gather around it the associations and customs of
winter festival. The more distinctly religious obs
vances were easily transported to a southern latitu
but in the case of many social and festive traditio
this was impossible. Nevertheless, Christmas is
merry under the Southern Cross as under Charle
Wain, but it is there essentially a summer holid
associated with flowers and picnics. A couple of snatch
of Antipodean verse may illustrate this aspect of t
festive season. A poet of English birth, but Australi
domicile, writes thus of Christmas Eve:

" Where the Fern-king holds his revels in his hidden cou
of green,
And the wire-grass weaves a curtain to enshrine the my
scene;
There I lingered in the gloaming of a sunny Christmas-ti

There I lingered 'midst the shadows while the daylight waned
and died:
There I mused, and dreamed, and pondered of the happy
days of yore,
Ere my errant feet had wandered to this strange Australian
shore."

is meditations are interrupted by a band of children
nging a carol, which runs thus:

" Morning Star o'er Bethlehem shining,
Guide us to His lowly bed;
Evening lights at day's declining
Soft reveal His weary head;
Flowers that bloom 'mid thorn and briar
Shadow forth His footsteps fair;
Birds' sweet song in tuneful choir
Sing His love and guardian care."

47. YULE-TIDE IN THULE

Before treating of the subsidiary festivals which go
complete the Christmas cycle, it seems convenient
say something of the customs that prevailed a cen-
ry ago in the northern islands, where Scottish Puri-
nism was strangely blended with survivals of Scandi-
ıvian heathenism. This topic is somewhat elaborately
eated in *The Home of a Naturalist*, by B. Edmundson
ıd J. M. E. Saxby; from which the following account
condensed.

The Yule-tide observances of Shetland seem to have
ıd but little relation to the Nativity; being largely a
rvival from the old Norse festival of the returning
n. The few who observed Christmas as a Christian
ıniversary did so according to the Reformed Calendar;

but the popular Yule was 25th December, old sty equivalent to 5th January, new style.

The Yule feast needed serious preparation. Sev days earlier was "Tul-ya's E'en", when the "Trows or "Grey Folk" were thought to leave their unde ground abodes. These were elves or gnomes, resembli if not identical with the Trolls of Norse mytholog sportively malignant, and certain to do mischief Yule-tide unless due precautions were taken by "sai ing" the house and its occupants. Two straws we placed across at the stile or other entrance to the stac yard; a hair was plucked from the tail of every c and beast of burden, and these, plaited together, we placed over the door of the byre; and a blazing p was carried through the barn and other outhous That night, called "Helya's Night", after supper, t grandmother or oldest woman in the house wou spread her hands over the bed of each child, recit an incantation to this effect:

> "Mary, Mother, hold thy hand
> Ever above our sleeping band:
> Hold the lass and hold the wife,
> Hold the bairn all its life;
> Mary, Mother, hold thy hand
> Round the infants in our land."

During this ceremony the grandsire should rake t burning peats on the hearth, reciting another char which is now unfortunately forgotten.

"Thamas-mass", five days before Yule, was deem peculiarly holy. No work and no amusement w allowed after sunset; if this rule were broken, ill lu

ɔuld surely follow. The Sunday before Yule was Byana's Sunday ". Half a cow's head was boiled and ten for supper; the skull was cleaned, and, a candle ing stuck in the eye-socket, it was put aside for later e.

On Yule Eve a round oat-cake was baked for each ild, larger or smaller according to age. These cakes d a hole in the middle, and were pinched into points ɔund the edges; probably a reminiscence of the Sun Wheel ". After this everyone made a complete lution, from head to foot, three live coals being opped into the water as a charm against the Trows. clean, and if possible, a new garment was put on in ıich to sleep; but before sleeping the house was ıde tidy, all soiled water thrown away, all unseemly ings put out of sight, all locks opened, an iron or el blade—much feared by the Trows—was laid on e table, and a lamp left burning all night.

Before daylight the gudeman lit the before-provided ndle, and carried it around as he fed the beasts, giving em better food than usual. Breakfast was eaten by ndlelight, as many candles as possible being provided. ıe meal was as sumptuous as means would permit, d concluded—at least in the better-class houses—th a draught of " Whipcol ". This consisted of the lks of a dozen eggs, beaten up with a pound of sugar, f a pint of rum, and a quart of cream. There was a t that it was the tipple of the gods and heroes at ir Yule-feast in Walhalla.

The short daylight was spent by the men and boys a game of football, Yule being the opening day of season for that favourite sport. No work of any

kind must be done, " Else muckle dule will be th share, this year and mair ". Dinner was eaten at su set, as ponderously substantial as the breakfast, wi as many dainties of all kinds as could be procure The evening was devoted to dancing; but it w necessary first to " sain " the children against the mali of the Trows. There was a gruesome story of two bair whom their mother left in bed, forgetting to say t charm when she went to dance in a neighbour's bar Remembering her omission, she turned back to repa it, but the children had vanished, and the next d were found dead in a snowdrift. The Trows were fo of dancing, and would, if possible, intrude into t company of mortals during the Yule-tide festiviti but they always vanished if pious words we spoken. It was, however, dangerous to talk light of them.

From Yule to New Year's Day, O.S., no work mu be done, else ill luck will follow through the ye Football by day and dancing in the evening furnish the principal occupations. But on " New'r'day " wo of every kind must begin, if only for a few minut " everything pertaining to thrift was got under way begin the year well ". Work and play went hand hand till the O.S. Twelfth Day (17th January, N.S when there were social merry makings on an enlarg scale. At the close of the day all doors were opene a great pretence was made of driving out invisib intruders, passages from the Bible were read or recit and iron was ostentatiously displayed " to drive t Trows away ". And when the next day dawned, t Trows had vanished and " The Yules " were end

48. SUBSIDIARY FESTIVALS

We now come to deal with the subordinate festivals the Christmas cycle, each of which has its own ecial folk-lore. It was thought that as the season of lvent, leading up to Christmas, represents the coming God to men, the twelve days following Christmas, d culminating in Epiphany, represented the coming man to God. In England, during the Saxon narchy, it was ordained by law that these twelve ys should be kept holy; an ordinance which, like nost every other good thing of that age, was popu- ly ascribed to Alfred the Great.[1]

Boxing Day has been already referred to in con- ction with Christmas boxes; but from the latter rt of the fourth century it has been observed as the st of St. Stephen. This distinction was no doubt nferred on him as the first Christian martyr. Of ephen we know absolutely nothing except what is orded in two chapters of the New Testament; but re is a " Carol for St. Stephen's Day ", assigned about the year 1400, which describes him as Herod's erk of the Kitchen:

tephen out of kitchen came, with boar's head in hand;
Ie saw a star was fair and bright over Bethlehem stand.
Ie cast down the boar's head, and went into the hall:
I forsake thee, King Herod, and thy workes all;
'here is a Child in Bethlehem born is better than we all.' "

is announcement is confirmed (as in the story of

[1] It is probably a mere coincidence that in some Oriental communities it is commonly that whoever eats lentils in the twelve days following Christmas will be smitten with nange.

" The Carnal and the Crane ") by the crowing o
roasted fowl; whereupon Herod commands the t
mentors to lead Stephen out of town, and stone h
without delay. Apart from the native absurdity of
story, the anachronism would be hard to beat.

The feast of St. Stephen was not very pleasant
horses in days when Dr. Sangrado was a typical med
practitioner. Kirchmeyer tells us that every man dr
his horses

" as swiftly as he can,
Until they do extremely sweat; and then they let them bl
Which being done upon that day they say it does them g
And keeps them from all maladies and sickness through
year;
As if that Stephen any time took charge of horses here."

The custom is said still to survive in Austria and Ty
In many parts of Germany, too, and still more
Sweden, customs relating to horses are in vogue—ra
cavalcades, feeding the horses with consecrated br
or corn, giving them hallowed salt, and sprinkling th
with holy water. It would seem, however, that all
is in honour, not of the Biblical Stephen, but of
Stephen a missionary and martyr in Sweden, who
a great lover of horses, and was slain by the heat
in the ninth century.

The pleasant modern ballad of Good King W
ceslaus and his page " on the feast of Stephen
said to be founded on traditions of an actual occurr
in Bohemia.

In the north of Yorkshire, till about a hundred y
ago, the farmers' wives were accustomed to make l
goose pies, which were cut up on St. Stephen's

d distributed to the poor. One of the pies was usually pt to be eaten at Candlemas. At present, however, tside ecclesiastical circles, St. Stephen's Day is rcely known in England except by its alternative me of Boxing Day.

But in theatrical circles it has been for several nerations *the* great day of the year—the commence-nt of the pantomime season. In the eighteenth tury the theatres were accustomed to present what re regarded as Moral Plays of the type of " George rnwell " for the edification of the London 'prentices. t toward the end of the century it occurred to the nagers that it might be better business to cater for boys and girls home from school, with a fairy tale a popular story, leading up to a laughable harle-nade. The experiment proved a complete success, ed as it was by the extraordinary popularity of the brated clown Joseph Grimaldi. A generation later nagers were accustomed to announce that the new tomime had been in preparation all the summer. dually the proverbial inconstancy of fashion dis-ntenanced the traditional " Harlequin, Columbine, wn, and Pantaloon ", and demanded sparkling jests, rageous puns, topical songs, and the like, ending n a gorgeous Transformation Scene. The usual ndwork of these entertainments is still, as of old, airy tale like " Cinderella " or " The Sleeping uty "; a story from the *Arabian Nights*, like " Alad-" or " The Forty Thieves "; or a popular folk-tale " Whittington and his Cat " or *Robinson Crusoe*. late years attempts, not wholly unsuccessful, have

been made to enforce moral lessons by dramatiz
such stories as Dickens's *Christmas Carol* or Kingsl
Water Babies, but on the whole the public, especi
the children, seem to prefer the non-moral.

St. John's Day, 27th December, is a festival of
great antiquity, having only been established by ec
siastical authority in the thirteenth century. The o
special custom of the day was the drinking, someti
to excess, of consecrated wine. This was said to
in memory of St. John having drunk a cup of poi
from which he received no harm. Some folk-lorists
it was a survival of an old heathen wine sacrifice.
sorts of magical virtues were ascribed to this hallo
wine. Men drank it to make them strong, and m
to make them fair. In Tyrol it was supposed to pro
the drinker from being struck by lightning; in Rh
land it guarded the other wine which a man m
possess from injury; in Styria it kept the body so
and healthy; in Bavaria it was kept as a medi
against sickness. In Carinthia, Nassau, and o
places, some of it was poured into the wine-cask
protect the stock from harm. In the seventeenth
tury these drinking customs were so rife that scho
maintained with every appearance of seriousness
the German word for Christmas, *Weihnacht*, i.e. " H
Night ", was merely a misspelling of *Weinnacht*,
" Wine Night ". Probably the truest explanatio
the whole was given by a teetotaler, who sagely
" They drink because they like it ".

The day of the Holy Innocents, 28th Decem
commonly called " Childermas ", and in Northamp

hire " Dyzemas ", was generally accounted unlucky. t was unlucky to pare one's nails, to put on a new suit, r to begin any kind of work. If any work was begun n that day, it would either never be finished, or would ave an unfortunate ending. Not only so: it was held hat the corresponding day of the week throughout the ext twelve months was likewise unlucky. From the aston Letters (clxviii, 21st June, 1461) we learn that he coronation of Edward IV, originally fixed for unday, 28th June, was on this account deferred to he next day.

In many places it was customary on Innocents' Day whip the children all round " to make them re-ember Herod's cruelty ". In France children who llowed themselves to be caught in bed on that morning me in for a whipping; in Normandy the early risers nong the young people themselves gave the sluggards beating. In the Saxon Erzgebirge the young men hip the women and girls on St. Stephen's Day, if ssible, while they are still in bed; and the girls taliate on St. John's Day. In other parts of Germany e girls on St. Stephen's Day and the boys on St. hn's Day beat their parents with fir branches, and e servants beat their masters with rosemary twigs. his is accompanied with a ditty imploring good luck, long life, for the person who is beaten. That these hipping customs were not restricted to Innocents' ay makes it very unlikely that they were originally mmemorative of Herod's massacre. They were more obably—indeed almost certainly—of heathen origin, signed either to expel evil spirits or to confer some agical benefit. They seem related to the Roman

Lupercalia, when young men ran about the streets wi thongs, striking every woman they met; the acti being regarded as distinctly beneficent. The associati of the custom with the Innocents' Day is a me adaptation.

We have already recorded the custom at Godst in the thirteenth century, when on Innocents' Day t public prayers were said by children. At a later peri there were processions of children on that day, whi were suppressed by Henry VIII in 1540. It may that a notion of literalizing the Scripture precept " be as little children " suggested a ludicrous practi at Lincoln's Inn in the early part of the sixteenth ce tury; when a " King of Cockneys " was elected, w held a mock court on Innocents' Day. More commen able is a pleasant custom which of late years has be observed in Westminster Abbey, where, on the aft noon of Innocents' Day, a musical service is held spe ally adapted for children, and Old English carols a sung in procession. This surely deserves to be imitat wherever there are facilities for doing it effective In several parishes of West Somerset and Herefo shire it was long customary to ring a muffled peal Innocents' Day. This practice survived until wit living memory.

29th December, before the Reformation, was t ecclesiastical commemoration of St. Thomas of C terbury, otherwise Archbishop Becket, who w murdered in the cathedral on that day in 11 References to him are found in several old car this, for example:

" The fifth day hallowed St. Thomas,
Right as a strong pillar of brass
Held up the church, and slain he was,
And crowned was for his prowess."

ut we have not met with any traditional custom on at day which seems at all related to him, or to the nour in which he was deservedly held as a champion the Church against the usurpations of the civil wer.

30th December, in the ecclesiastical Calendar, is signed for the commemoration of two or three all-t-forgotten saints, of ancient date and purely local lebrity. The final day of the year is dedicated to . Sylvester, Bishop of Rome in the days of Con-ntine the Great, who figures largely in the monstrous ghth-century fiction of *The Donation of Constantine*. o popular custom or tradition is associated with these lack letter saints ". As to the midnight services ich originated in the early days of the Methodist vival, and which are now common far beyond the unds of Methodism, they were designed simply as olemn consecration of the New Year; and can only regarded as an interlude in the Christmas festivities.

In Scotland, before the Reformation, Yule-tide festi-ies were conducted with so much extravagance and order that the days from Christmas Eve to the New ar were popularly spoken of as " The Daft Days ". e violent and revolutionary character of the Scottish formation issued in the abandonment of all eccle-stical anniversaries; " Pasque and Yule " among the t being condemned as relics of Papistry or hea-

thenism. But the proverb holds good, " Though yo thrust out nature with a pitch-fork she will return " and the " Daft Days " were merely transferred to th New Year.

Still, the Puritanic endeavour of the Scottish R formers to make all things new did not find favour i the Gaelic-speaking districts of the northern Highland where customs of pre-Reformation and even pre-Chri tian antiquity survived till quite recent times. The ter Nollaig (cf. Welsh *Nadolig* and Latin *Natalis*) w applied to the whole seven days from Christmas E to the New Year. During that time tradition forba any serious work. The house was decked with hol " to keep away the fairies ", who certainly were n regarded as welcome guests. Christmas Eve w " oidhche nam bannagan ", " night of cakes ", from custom of giving a cake to every person who entere the house. A slice cut from the Christmas chee at the feast was supposed to have magical virtue Familiar sayings were " No Christmas without flesh and " Whom Christmas does not make cheerful East will leave sad and tearful ".

Other Gaelic customs, relating to the eve of th New Year, seem to be mere survivals of heathenis and need not be further enlarged on.

49. NEW YEAR'S EVE—HAGMENA

Neither in the Roman nor in the Anglican Chur Calendar is there any authoritative recognition of Ne Year's Day or of its eve. This is owing to the fact th throughout Western Christendom the ecclesiasti

ear was supposed to begin with Advent. But in very arly times every great ecclesiastical festival had its octave", a kind of diminished celebration on the ighth day; the intermediate days being devoted to ieditation on the topic of the season. Now the Octave f Christmas, being New Year's Day, came into violent ollision with the heathen festivity of the Kalends of anuary, which was often an occasion of much licen- ousness. For a time, therefore, the Church in many laces kept the day as a fast by way of protest. But bout the seventh century, if not earlier, it was remem- ered that, as a son of Abraham, Jesus was "circum- sed the eighth day", and received the "Name that above every name". A festival of the Circumcision ierefore supplanted the Octave of Christmas; and, erhaps by way of compensation, the observances due the latter were extended to twelve days. The 1st January, however, was not honoured with a vigil ich as had been accorded to most of the greater feasts.

The midnight services with which the New Year introduced in some Anglican churches are not, there- re, a survival of ancient custom, but are frankly bor- wed from Methodism. In the early days of the Iethodist Revival, about 1741, some colliers at Kings- ood, who before their spiritual awakening had been customed to spend their Saturday nights in revelling id drunkenness, began to spend those nights in prayer id thanksgiving. Wesley approved of their practice, id commended it, with modifications, to the Metho- st Society in London. The devotional meeting was be held monthly, on the Friday night nearest to the ll moon. The first such meeting was held on 9th

April, 1742. In course of time the "Watch-night" came to be specialized on New Year's Eve, and, in 175c Charles Wesley gave to the Church that inspired an inspiring lyric, "Come, let us anew our journey pursue &c.", wherewith in Methodist circles the New Year i welcomed throughout the world. A custom which lon survived in the Lake District, and which perhaps i not yet quite extinct, may be regarded as semi-eccle siastical; this was to "ring out the old year" wit muffled bells, and to follow with a merry peal imme diately on the stroke of midnight.

But for the most part the observance of New Year Eve is ostentatiously secular. There is no need t enlarge on its character as displayed around the Tro Kirk in Edinburgh, in St. Paul's Churchyard, Londor and elsewhere when Scotchmen do congregate, "Drink ing was and is a great feature of the Scottish New Year Eve". Bonfires were lighted in some places "to bur out the old year"; in others a tar-barrel was set o fire and carried about the village, its embers being kep as a charm against witchcraft. Formerly in the High lands it was usual on New Year's Day to fumigate th house, stables, byres, &c., with juniper, to preserv both man and beast from harm through the comin year. A similar custom persists in Southern German Austria, and Tyrol; the peasant goes with all his hous hold through every room and outhouse, his wife carry ing a vessel of holy water, and a censer; every huma being, every beast, and even the provisions "must b purified with sacred smoke and the holy sprinkling In some places, according to Kirchmeyer, this fum

ation was performed on Twelfth Night; and some, e says, repeated it on three nights in succession.

New Year's Eve is a favourite season for divinations. n Germany lead is melted in a spoon over a candle, nd thrown into water; omens being drawn from the hapes it assumes. In Lithuania various symbolic bjects, usually nine of them, are formed of dough, aked, and laid under nine platters; each person takes o three, and whatever he gets will be symbolic of s future for the year. In Greece two olive leaves, to present a pair of lovers, are laid on the cinders; these curl, approach, recoil, or flame up, so will e the issue of the courtship. One cannot fail to bserve the close resemblance of these practices to ose described by Burns as customary in Scotland on allow-e'en, which, as has been said above, was the eltic New Year's Eve.

An enormous amount of ingenuity has been spent endeavours to trace the parentage of the cabbalistic ord " Hagmena " or " Hogmanay ", which, with its numerable variants, is found in begging ditties sung New Year's Eve throughout Western Europe. The assical derivation from the Greek *hagia menē*, i.e. oly Month, is probably the least likely of all. Not uch likelier is a guess that goes back to the heathen ule-tide, affirming that the night before the solstice as called " Huggunott ", i.e. " Slaughter Night ", th reference either to sacrifice, or to the slaughter of ttle for the feast, or for winter provision: this, with Mennie ", said to be " the cup of remembrance, ways drained at the Yule feast ", furnishes a hybrid

and (very improbable) etymology of " Hogmanay

Less far-fetched is the guess that derives " Ho menay, Troleray " from a forgotten French Epipha carol said to have commenced " L'Homme est né, Tr rois là, &c.". But it seems much more likely that old French chanty, " Au gui menez, tiri liri, Mair du blanc et point du bis ", may have been develope partly by translation and partly by corruption, into t Scottish

> " Hogmenay, Troleray,
> Gie's your white bread and nane o' your grey "

" Gui " is the French name for mistletoe; so that " gui menez " would be " Lead to the mistletoe ". Mi says this derivation is generally discredited, as well another from " Au guy l'an neuf ", i.e. " To the mist toe the New Year "; but he does not suggest anythi more probable. " Aguillanneuf " is used in France bo for the last day of the year and for the gift that is th expected. " Aguilando " and " Aguinaldo " are Spani forms for a Christmas box; " Hoguinané " was Norm French; other forms were " Hoguinano ", and " H guignettes " for gifts. In Brittany the cry was " guyané ", and the boys called themselves the " hog liannew ". In the Isle of Man a ditty of a simi character was sung by Mummers on the eve of Saints' Day, which, as we have seen, was the Ce New Year's Eve—the commencement of winter. began " To-night is New Year's Night, Hogunnaa ". very similar form occurs at Roxburgh, and elsewh in the south of Scotland, viz. " Hunganay ".

Quite a different, it may be an independent, de

ıtion is suggested by the ditty sung at Richmond, in orkshire:

To-night it is the New Year's Night, to-morrow is the day,
And we are come for our rights, for our 'ray,
As we were used to do in Old King Harry's day:
Sing, fellows, sing Hagman-heigh!"

hagg is an old Yorkshire word for a wood or coppice, ıd a hagman was a woodcutter. It seems not unlikely at this last version, originating at a time when "Old ing Harry" was still in living memory, and wood as commonly used for fuel, may have been the woodıtter's appeal to his customers for a seasonable remem-ance.

Another chanty runs thus:

"Rise up, gudewife, and shake your feathers,
And do not think that we are beggars:
We are bairns come out to play,
So come and gie 's our hogmanay."

An old guisards' rhyme recorded in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1790, carries a grim suggestion:

"Rise up, gudewife, and be na swe'er
To deal your bread as long 's you 're here:
The time will come when you 'll be dead,
And neither want for meal nor bread."

The same superstitions, now chiefly remembered way of jest, respecting "First Footings" on Christas mornings, apply to the earliest moments of the ew Year. Many country folk still observe the old ıstom of opening all the doors in the house a minute two before midnight on 31st December, and leaving em open until the clocks have struck the hour. This

is called " Letting the old year out and the new ye in "; or, as others affirm, " the expulsion of the O Adam and welcoming the New ". In the west of En land it was customary, before breakfast on New Yea Morning, to open the Bible at random, to read t verse on which the finger happened to rest, and fro it to deduce omens or prognostications for the openi year.

In several places, both in England, Wales, and Sc land, the first who at midnight on New Year's Eve c draw from the well a pitcher of " new water " will ha the best luck. (One thinks, perforce, of " the Well St. Keyne ".) The water, drunk on New Year's Mor ing, is a charm against witchcraft and the Evil Ey In some parts of Italy the well is decorated on Ne Year's Eve; in the morning the girls go as usual f water, but the lads are on guard, and only sell the wat for nuts, fruit, or kisses.

The first Monday in the New Year is, in vario places, called " Hansel Monday "; the word meani " first sale, or use ". It is deemed lucky to recei money early in the day, and very unlucky to let an thing go out of the house before breakfast.

50. OLD CHRISTMAS EVE: WASSAILING TREES

We have already treated of the Wassail Bowl, and t ceremonial visit paid to the cattle by the wassailers Gloucestershire and Herefordshire; remarking that wa sailing in Somerset, Devon, and some other places

altogether different, though no doubt related, prac-e. It is in fact the survival of a pleasant rustic custom, hich Herrick thus describes:

> " Wassail the trees, that they may bear
> You many a plum and many a pear;
> For more or less of fruit they bring
> As you do give them wassailing."

he ceremony is deemed proper to old Christmas Eve, . the eve of Epiphany, which corresponds to Christ-as, old style. First, a verse of the traditional Wassail ng, " Wassail, wassail, all over the town ", or one its many variants, is sung: then the company pro-ed to the orchard, bearing a large jar or bowl of ler. They surround the largest or most fruitful tree, ast it in cider, and dip a branch of the tree in the uor, or pour or sprinkle cider upon it. Sometimes ns—loaded with powder only—are fired, and kettles aten to make a great noise. Sometimes three shouts re given, each followed by a blast of a horn; and fore each shout all stooped and rose as if lifting avy sacks. Another custom was to place a crumb of ead or cake and a little salt in the fork of the tree. is appears like " sympathetic magic ". Dr. Rendel rris thinks it a survival from some forgotten cult of Apple-god, the apple being perhaps the first fruit in gland to be improved by cultivation. The songs—or nsense verses—that are sung vary in different places; s, from Somerset, seems about the least idiotic:

Wassail, wassail, all round the town;
The zider-cup 's white and the zider 's brown;
Our zider is made vrom good apple trees,
And now my vine vellows we 'll drink if you please.

We 'll drink your health with all our heart,
We 'll drink to 'ee all bevore we part.
Here 's one, and here 's two, and here 's dree bevore we g
We are dree jolly boys all in a row."

Here is another Somerset chanty:

" Apple tree, apple tree, I wassail thee
To blow and to bear
Hat-vulls, cap-vulls, dree bushel bag-vulls,
And my pockets vull too, hip, hip, hurrah!"

In Devon and Cornwall the tree spirit was incarnate
a small bird, presumably a robin or tom-tit. He
it) was represented by a little boy, who climbed
tree, and cried out " Tit, tit, more to eat ", on wh
a piece of bread and cheese or some cake and cider
given him. The usual ditty was:

" Here 's to thee, old apple tree,
Whence to bud and whence to blow,
And whence to bear us apples enow:
Barn-fulls, bag-fulls, sack-fulls,
Lap-fulls, hat-fulls, cap-fulls:
Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!"

Of this there were several variants. Either roas
apples or toast was put in the cider jug; and what
not drunk was sprinkled on the trees. The ritual var
in different places. In Devon a pailful of cider, i
which roasted apples had been broken, was set in
middle of the orchard; from this pail each person fil
an earthen cup, and, going to a tree, drank part of
contents, and threw the remainder, with fragments
apple, at the foot of the tree. A piece of cake dip
in cider was placed in a fork of the tree " for the robin

This custom survived in two or three orchards near Minehead (West Somerset) till the early years of the present century. The proper time for wassailing trees was old Twelfth Night, corresponding to 17th January, new style.

In Hampshire, in the neighbourhood of the New Forest, the ditty was:

> " Apples and pears, and right good corn,
> Come in plenty to every one;
> Eat and drink good cakes and ale;
> Give earth to drink and she will not fail."

In Kent and Sussex a kind of half-belief in the value of these incantations appears to have survived almost until within living memory. The Kentish chanty was:

> " Stand fast, root, bear well, top;
> God send us a *yowling*[1] crop,
> Every twig, apple big;
> Every bough apples enow;
> Hats full, caps full, bushel bushel sacks full,
> And my pockets full too! Hooray!"

If no gratuity were forthcoming, this benediction might be neutralized by a curse on the trees. In Kent the rite was sometimes performed in Rogation Week, and in Sussex on New Year's Eve.

51. EPIPHANY

From very early times the religious observances of Christmas were extended to twelve days. Collier (*Ecclesiastical History*) accounts for this by a supposed " law of King Alfred ", to whom tradition has ascribed,

[1] Sometimes " howling " sometimes " yuling ", the meaning of which is doubtful.

with equal probability, almost every old English custom civil or ecclesiastical. However, the season's festivitie usually ended with Twelfth Night, or the Feast of th Epiphany; which since 1800 coincided with the Chris mas of the old style or Unreformed Calendar, and wa therefore observed for two or three generations as " Ol Christmas Day ". Indeed in West Somerset there ar traces of " Old Christmas " down to quite recent time It was especially the horses' holiday, for they were re leased from all labour, and—according to the kindl precept of St. Francis—received an extra supply of pro vender. All work on the farm was forbidden; to violat that rule was sure to bring ill luck. But it is uncertai whether this is in honour of Christmas Day, old styl or of the Feast of the Epiphany.

The ceremonies proper to this day were in com memoration of the wise men from the East who wer led by the Star to Bethlehem. Patristic and mediæv legend uniformly represents these as kings, and find in their pilgrimage and offerings a literal fulfilment predictions in *Psalm* lxxii, 10, and *Isaiah* lx, 6. The royalty was firmly established in popular belief by th early part of the fourth century. They were alleg to have been baptized by St. Thomas the Apostle; an what were supposed to be their embalmed bodies we brought to Constantinople by the Empress Helen They were removed thence to Milan; and subsequentl about 1170, to Cologne, where their bones still rema in a costly shrine, the skulls being adorned with jewelle crowns of great value.[1]

The belief that these visitors were kings is respo

[1] See further legends respecting them in section 16.

ble for the curious ceremonial still practised in the hapel Royal, St. James'; wherein the king, now by roxy but formerly in person, makes a formal presentaon of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Down to the iddle of the eighteenth century, the king went in ate, preceded by heralds, pursuivants, and the knights the Garter, Thistle, and Bath, in the collars of their spective orders. But on the insanity of George III l this was discontinued; and in these days two gentlemen from the Lord Chamberlain's office take gold, ankincense, and myrrh from a box adorned at the p with a spangled star, and place them on an almssh held by the officiating clergyman. The ceremony very ancient; but we have not been able to trace its igin. A similar custom existed in Spain. In France e day is called " Le jour des rois ", i.e. the day of e kings; and it was so offensive to the Revolutionary wers in 1792 that its observance was strictly forbidden. Indeed any priest found celebrating it would ve been in imminent danger of death.

In France and Italy, during the Middle Ages, there re semi-dramatic representations of the Epiphany t unlike the early ecclesiastical Nativity Plays. One them is described in Fosbroke's *Antiquities*. " Three iests, clothed as kings, with their servants carrying erings, met from different directions before the altar. ne middle one, who came from the East, pointed with s staff towards a star. After mutual salutations and short dialogue, a procession was formed, and as soon it entered the nave a star resembling a cross was hted up, and pointed out to the kings with, ' Behold

the Star in the East!' Two priests, standing on ea side of the altar, said, 'We are they whom ye see and, drawing a curtain, showed a child, whom, falli down, they worshipped. Then the servants present the offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. T mage-kings continued praying till they fell aslee when a boy clothed in an alb, to represent an ang addressed them with, 'All things which the proph said are fulfilled.'" At Soissons the star was rep sented by an iron circle bearing seven tapers, let do by a rope from the roof of the church.

A more elaborate mummery was exhibited by t preaching friars at Milan in 1336. The three kin appeared crowned, each on a great horse richly capa soned, and attended by pages, bodyguards, and a gr retinue. A golden star was exhibited as going bef them. At the pillars of St. Lawrence they met Ki Herod with his scribes and wise men; they asked h where Christ should be born; and the scribes, havi consulted their books, answered, "At Bethlehem Thereupon the three kings, having in their hands gold cups filled with frankincense, myrrh, and gold, march with all their attendants to the Church of St. Eustorgi the golden star went before them, and they were preced by trumpets and horns, also by asses, apes, and oth animals. In the church, on one side of the altar, w a manger with ox and ass, and the Christ-Child the arms of His Mother; to whom the mage-kin offered their gifts.

In Italy the gifts, which English, French, and G man children expect at Christmas, are often delayed

Epiphany, when they are supposed to commemorate the gifts of the wise men to the Holy Child. The festival is often personified, like our " Father Christmas "; and the children ascribe the gifts to " Befana ". But Befana is somewhat of a bogie; mothers tell naughty children that " Befana will eat them ".

In Spain the gifts at Epiphany are brought by " the Three Holy Kings ", who go every year to Bethlehem to visit the Holy Child, and leave sweets and toys for good children, who put their shoes outside the window to receive them. In Spain, and also in Provence, the children formerly went out on Epiphany Eve to see the kings pass by. Of course they did not see them; " the kings had passed behind the mountain ". But the children were not long disappointed; after supper they went to church, and there were the kings kneeling in adoration before the Christmas crib.

In many parts of France, Germany, and Switzerland on the eve of Epiphany, boys, and sometimes also girls, went about in masks and strange disguises, shouting, knocking at every door, and making a great noise to scare away ghosts and devils. In other places a mummery was performed, in which the leader carried on a pole a lantern in the form of a star, or perhaps a large gilt star, while the rest sang a carol in its praise. Our Anglo-Saxon forefathers identified the Star of Bethlehem with a certain bright star which they called " Earendel ". In an Anglo-Saxon poem of the ninth or tenth century we find this line, " Hail, Earendel, brightest of Angels ". In some Eastern communities it is said that at Epiphany dough rises without being leavened; but leaven made from this dough must on

no account be lent to any one. At Epiphany the tree on the banks of Jordan bow and adore the Saviour. C wassailing trees on the eve of Epiphany we have treate already.

52. TWELFTH NIGHT

According to Ecclesiastical Order the evening ser vice shortly after sunset on 5th January is the " Firs Vespers " of Epiphany. But in spite of Church Calen dars most people will persist in beginning the day wit the morning; and so Twelfth Night commences a sunset on 6th January.

In Gloucestershire and Herefordshire it was usua at that time to light twelve small fires and one larg one in a field sown with wheat. This was vulgarl regarded as a charm to protect the wheat from Smu But in Ireland there was a variant of the custom; sieve full of oats was set up as high as was convenientl practicable; twelve lighted candles were set in th grain, with a larger one in the middle. The origina meaning of these customs is quite forgotten; some sa the fires or lights were intended to symbolize Chris and His twelve apostles as the Lights of the World while others regard them as a survival from the Yule fires of heathen Sun-worship.

At Brough, in Westmoreland, there was a custom which, though observed on Twelfth Night, seems remi niscent of some antiquated form of the Christmas tree A holly bush, or sometimes a young ash tree, was pre pared by fastening a torch to every branch. These were lighted; the tree was carried round the village accom panied with music and torches, and was saluted a

ertain stations. When the torches had burnt out, the ree was scrambled for by the respective partisans of he two village inns; and the victorious party carried it o their favoured hostel, where the night was spent in nerrymaking. In many village inns in the west of ngland the host "kept open house" on Twelfth Night; the ashen faggot blazed upon the hearth, and

"The mirth and fun grew fast and furious";

nd it is to be feared the virtue of sobriety was not ways duly cultivated.

But the Twelfth Night supper was the culmination f all. In the middle of the table was set a huge cake, n which was hidden a coin or a bean, and a pea. he cake being divided, he who had the coin or the ean was saluted as king, and the holder of the pea as ueen. (Presumably if a lady drew the bean she would ominate the king, and vice versa.) A mock court as constituted, the offices and titles being assigned by t; and the fun consisted in the characters being main- ined throughout the evening. These characters were ritten or printed on slips of paper, and drawn from hat; at least that was the English custom in the time Charles II. Later, pictorial characters with verses ere introduced, which were supplied by pastry-cooks d confectioners. These are said to have been devised one John Britton, topographer and antiquary (1771–57). They were at first courtly, historical, or legen- ry, or taken from the popular comedies of the day. he custom continued till far into the nineteenth cen- ry, but was at length killed by the introduction of arse and offensive characters, like Sir Gregory

Goose or Sir Tunbelly Clumsy. It is not unlikely th the grotesque head-dresses of modern Christm crackers have some relation to the extinct Twelf Night characters.

As to the cake, an early recipe informs us that was made of flour, honey, ginger, and pepper; but Herrick's time it was an ordinary plum cake. By t end of the eighteenth century it was elaborately adorn with more or less artistic figures in sugar or plast often gaudily coloured. We read of one cake in t form of a fortress, with sentinels and flags. Some the devices were grotesque or humorous. The writ remembers seeing in his childhood, about 1851 or 185 a cake crowned with a realistic presentation of " t mill where they grind old women young ". The cak were often of great size, the price sometimes amoun ing to several guineas.

Hone tells us that in his day, the time of the Regen and of George IV, these cakes made a glorious sho in every confectioner's shop window; and it was favourite prank of the London street boys to pin t gether the coats or gowns of the people who cluster around, or dexterously to nail a coat to the bottom a window-frame. Of course this was before the adve of the " new police ".

One Baddeley, an actor, who had formerly been cook, bequeathed in 1795 a sum of money " to provi cake and wine for the performers in the green-roo of Drury Lane Theatre on Twelfth Night ". And the present time, after the lapse of more than a centur the ceremonial " cutting of Baddeley's Cake " is reg larly continued.

In France the king or queen was the only distinguished character used. Usually the cake was cut up, and a child, covered with a cloth, named the recipient of each piece. The first piece was for " Le bon Dieu ", and the second for the Blessed Virgin. These were given to some poor persons; and if either of them contained the bean, the king was chosen by lot. All drank the king's health; and whenever he had occasion for liquid refreshment, the whole company shouted " The king drinks!" The customary Twelfth Night apple was the " lamb's wool " already described (p. 100). To this Kirchmeyer—or his translator, Barnaby Googe —adds that the Twelfth Night king was

" With shouts and cries
Exalted to the heavens up; who, taking chalk in hand,
Both make a cross on every beam and rafter as they stand;
Great force and power have these against all injuries and harms
Of goblins, devils, bugs, and sprites, of conjuring and charms.
So much this king can do; so much the crosses bring to pass,
Made by some servant maid, or child, or by some foolish ass."

In the west of England, where the Reformed Calendar was slowly and reluctantly accepted, the ceremonies of Epiphany were for several generations deferred till the twelfth day after " Christmas, old style "; so that the old Twelfth Night was 17th January, which was deemed the proper time for Wassailing both the cattle and the orchards.

Christmas was supposed to end with Twelfth Night, which in Normandy was marked by bonfires. In Sweden the date is the Octave of Epiphany, 13th January, called St. Knut's Day. King Knut, who died in 1036, forbade all fasting from Christmas to that date. On

that day the young people dance round the table, fro which all provisions are then removed; and the house hold, in a kind of mimic fight, pretend to drive awa any guests who may remain.

53. FEAST OF FOOLS, OR OF THE ASS

There was one strange custom, the date of whic varied in various places, but which wherever it wa observed was regarded as the final close of the Christ mas festivities. This was " The Feast of Fools ", other wise called " The Feast of the Ass ".

In French cathedrals and religious houses, wher the inferior clergy were numerous, it was customary i the twelfth century for the deacons to have a merry making on St. Stephen's Day, the priests on St. John's and the choir boys on Innocents'. Then on the 1s January (Circumcision), 6th January (Epiphany), o 13th January (Octave of Epiphany) the subdeacon and inferior clergy held a regular Saturnalia. A Vespers, at the words " Deposuit potentes de sede " in the Magnificat, the precentor's staff was handed t the clerk who had been chosen as lord of the feast and thenceforward the whole service was turned int burlesque. Everything was topsy-turvy; dice were cast and black puddings were eaten on the altar; ludi crous songs were sung, some danced in the choir i grotesque dresses, old leather was burned as mock incense; and in some places an ass was led into the church, in whose honour a ridiculous Latin hymn wa sung, with " hee-haw " for a refrain.

At Beauvais, on 14th January, a girl with a child

her arms rode on an ass into the church, to represent e journey of the Holy Child and His Mother into gypt: the mass was said, in which the Introit, Kyrie, loria, and Credo each ended with a bray; and at e close, instead of the usual " Ite, missa est ", the riest brayed three times, the people responding in ke manner. It is strange that such a burlesque of cred rites should have been tolerated, and apparently ncouraged, by ecclesiastical dignitaries, who would rtainly have persecuted anyone who dared seriously criticize either the rites or the opinions on which ey were grounded. There are traces of this irreverent lly in Germany and Bohemia; and when at length impropriety was recognized by those in authority, had become too popular to be easily suppressed. It as prohibited by the Council of Basle in 1435; yet e last trace of it lingered in the Cathedral of Amiens l 1721.

Here is a fairly close translation of the mock hymn which mention has just been made; the tune is und in several modern hymn-books, under the name " Corton ".

Orientis partibus

From the regions of the east
Came this strong and handsome beast:
None with Donkey may compare
For the loads that he will bear.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

Slow indeed his paces are,
If the cudgel be not there
To inflict a hastening thump,
Or the goad to vex his rump.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

By the measure of his ears,
Lord of asses he appears;
Son of sire who bore the yoke—
Truly an illustrious moke.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

He, on hills of Shechem born,
Reared beneath a bush of thorn,
Crossed old Jordan's hurrying stream,
Trotted on to Bethlehem.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

Then for coltish antics queer,
Capering kid and bounding deer,
Midian's dromedaries tall—
Bold Jack-Ass would beat them all.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

Incense from Sabaea's tree,
Myrrh, and gold of Araby,
At the church arrive at length
By the noble ass's strength.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

While he draws the loaded wain
With a deal of toil and pain,
Hard the provender he gnaws,
Crunching with his mighty jaws.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

Barley, with its bristly beard,
Wheat, from chaff and refuse cleared;
Prickly thistles all complete
Make for him a dainty treat.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

Amen, Donkey, say Amen,
With your chawdron full of grain:
Amen, Amen, yet once more,
Slighting all that was before.
Hail, Sir Donkey, hail!

54. PLOUGH MONDAY, ETC.

Nothing so bad as the Feast of Fools was ever tole-
ted in the Church of England. But rural England
ems to have been loth to resume the ordinary round
labour; for, although Christmas ended with Twelfth
ight, it was accounted ill manners to do a full day's
ork on the following day, jocosely called " St. Distaff's
ay ". If the men, coming in from work, found the
aids spinning, they would set fire to the flax; and the
aids would retaliate by drenching the men with water.

The Monday next after Twelfth Night was called
Plough Monday ". The common explanation of the
me is that it was usual to commence ploughing on
at day; but in view of the fact that but little ploughing
done in January, some other origin seems to be
manded. It appears that in Catholic times the
oughmen were accustomed to keep lights burning
fore certain images in the churches, to obtain a
essing on their work. These were called " Plough-
hts "; and it is said that the men used to go about
procession on this day to collect money for their
aintenance. The Plough-lights ceased at the Refor-
ation; but in many places the procession continued
ith humorous developments (such as morris dancing
d the like), the money being expended in social
stivity.

In the north of England it was customary, with living memory, for parties of young men, ludicrous bedizened and harnessed together with ropes, to dr a plough—called " the Fool Plough " (probably a co ruption of " Yule Plough ")—round the village, wi much cracking of whips and blowing of horns. Som times this was accompanied by music and mor dancers, and generally by a fool and his femini counterpart, called " the Bessy ". The fool was oft dressed in skins, with a dependent tail; and the Bes was commonly a boy dressed to represent an o woman.

Plough Monday is now chiefly remembered in co nection with some customary services in manori courts, which are still rendered on that day.

55. CANDLEMAS

According to the Law of Moses, as understood 19 years ago, every first-born son was to be presente before the Lord, and redeemed by an offering. Th was usually done on the fortieth day from the birt of the child; until which time the mother was accounte ceremonially " unclean ". Our Lord, as became Hi who was in all things obedient to the law, was dul presented " after the custom of the law "; and ol Simeon, who in all likelihood had heard the strang story which the shepherds " made known abroad . . concerning this Child ", recognized in Him the long awaited " Consolation of Israel ", the promised " Ligh to lighten the Gentiles ". It was quite in accord wit the pious sentiment of early Christian ages that thi

cognition should be commemorated by an anniver-
ry, which should terminate the Christmas cycle, as
oly Thursday does that of Easter. If we may accept
e authority of Baronius, this anniversary was observed
Jerusalem as early as A.D. 385, and at Rome during
e pontificate of Gelasius, 492–496. In the Danubian
ovince it was observed about 500; at Constantinople
out 542; in Gaul in 650; and in England it was
entioned by Beda early in the eighth century. By
e Greeks it was called *Hypapantè*, i.e. the feast of
eeting; in the west it was the feast of the *Presentation*,
of *SS. Simeon and Anna*; or, among the more ritually
sposed, the *Purification of the Blessed Virgin*.

But the prophetic words of Simeon suggested
other title, the *Feast of Lights*; of which adaptations
d variants are found in many languages. In German
is *Lichtmesse*, in Danish *Kendelmess*, in English
ndlemas, in old French *Candelière*, in modern French
Chandeleur, and in Italian *Candelora*, *Candelara*, or
a. Maria *Candelaria*.

These names, and the associated customs, remind us
at from of old the use of lamps and candles was
stomary, though not needed for lighting, yet sym-
lically, or as a token of rejoicing. It was disapproved
Tertullian in the third century, and by Lactantius
the fourth; but in the fifth century it seems to have
en specially appropriated to the feast of the Presenta-
n. Several authorities represent it as a Christianized
aptation of the Roman Lupercalia, when torches and
ndles were carried in honour of Ceres and Proserpine.
wever this may have been, in the earlier half of the
hth century there was at Rome on Candlemas Day

a procession with candles, in which the Pope and
deacons wore black vestments; and on that day " Glo
in Excelsis " was *not* sung. Of this custom we ha
found no explanation.

As to the practice of the Middle Ages, it is relat
that " on this day the Church blessed her candles
the whole year, and made a procession with bless
candles in the hands of the faithful ". The blessi
invoked on the candles was that " in whatsoever pl
they shall be lighted or put, the devil may depart, a
tremble, and fly away, with all his ministers, from th
habitation, and not presume any more to disturb
&c.". The candles thus blessed, when used in proc
sion, were commonly lighted from one very large o
which in Spain was kindled with " New Fire ", i
fire newly struck from flint. The candle-ends w
frequently preserved as charms.

The practice at Rome, about the year 1820, is th
described: The Benediction was given by the Pope
person, he being attended by the cardinals in rob
of crimson and gold. After the blessing His Holin
distributed the candles with his own hand to all prese
cardinals, bishops, abbots, priors, canons, &c., down
the humblest officials of the Church, going up sin
and kneeling to receive them. The candles were th
lighted, and the Pope, seated in his chair, was carri
round the ante-chapel in procession with chanti
After this the Pope and cardinals retired, resumed th
ordinary dresses, and proceeded with the usual mass

Candle-bearing on Candlemas Day was discontinu
in the Church of England by Order of Council in 15

it the more conservative of the clergy long persisted in arking the day by the use of an exceptionally large mber of tapers. A Puritan preacher in 1628 declared at " On Candlemass Day last past Mr. Cozens, in newing that Popish custom of burning candles to the nour of our lady, busied himself from two of the ck in the afternoon till four in climbing long ladders stick up wax candles in the cathedral church (of urham). The number of all the candles burnt that ening was 220, besides 16 torches; sixty of those rning tapers and torches standing upon and near e high altar, as he calls it, where no man came nigh." ne " Mr. Cozens " referred to is John Cosins, afterrds Bishop of Durham.

A contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1790 rrates that a few years before, being at Ripon on the nday before Candlemas, " he observed that the legiate church was one continued blaze of light all e afternoon, from an immense number of candles ".

Candlemas is one of the Scottish quarter-days, and s marked by some traditional observances, now solete, to the origin or significance of which a clue y perhaps be found in the fact that Candlemas Eve ncides with the festival of St. Bride or Bridget, the end of St. Patrick, and founder of the first nunnery Ireland. The connection of the Celtic Church in land with that in Scotland—especially the Western es—was very intimate, and many Scottish churches re dedicated in the names of Irish saints. In some of Western Isles the women of each household dressed heaf of oats in a woman's apparel, laid it in a large

basket with a club beside it, and just before going bed cried three times " Brüd is come, Brüd is w come ". If in the morning there should appear amo the ashes what might be thought the impression Brüd's club, this would be the omen of a prospero year, and vice versa. " Brüd " can scarcely be oth that St. Bride.

The usual dwelling of St. Bridget was Kildare; a there, for several hundred years, a perpetual fire w maintained, nominally in her honour, but really—the can be little doubt—as a survival of pre-Christian pra tice. The notion of a perpetual fire seems related the custom of rekindling the remains of the Yule L on Candlemas Eve, i.e. on St. Bride's Day, quenchi it at midnight, and reserving it to kindle the log ne year. Moreover, in most schools in the south of Sc land it was customary to kindle a " Candlemas Bleeze i.e. a bonfire; not infrequently a growing furze bus if found conveniently near, would be set on fire: a the boys and girls presented to the schoolmaster don tions of sixpence or a shilling—more or less accordi to the ability of the parents or the popularity of t dominie—as a contribution towards the " Candlem Bleeze ". The boy and girl who brought the m " bleeze " were acclaimed as king and queen of Cand mas. They were crowned, enthroned, and roya saluted; the whole school was regaled with biscuits a whisky-punch, the remainder of the day being spe in games and merrymaking. One need not be a fanati teetotaler to be of opinion that the best thing abo this custom was its discontinuance.

Football matches, parish against parish, or marri

gainst single, were customary in Scotland, and were enly contested. Several local and domestic customs ave also been reported as relating to the day, mostly nnected with candles. The weather, too, was deemed be indicative of that of the ensuing season, mostly y the rule of contraries; one of several Scottish eather-proverbs runs thus:

> " If Can'lemas day be fair and clear
> There 'll be twa winters in the year."

n England, outside purely ecclesiastical circles, Candleas is now scarcely recognized except as marking the finite end of the festive season, when—as before rected—the last remains of the Christmas decorations ould be removed. Then, as Herrick bids us

> " End now the white loaf and the pye,
> And let all sports with Christmas die."

56. EPILOGUE

In these later years we have been crowding into eat cities, and our villages have largely gone to decay. ow far this has been the inevitable result of causes yond human control, or how far it has been brought out by social abuses which are capable of being dressed, are questions for statesmen, which need to considered in the spirit not of the exchange but of e præsepio. The most poetical of our Christmas stoms pertain rather to the village than to the city. nd this is natural; it was at Bethlehem, not at Jeruem, or Babylon, or Rome, that the first Christmas rol was sung, the first Christmas gift presented; and

surely we may hope that as a result of increasi wisdom, and especially of a more Christian spirit, our social legislation, a new era of prosperity will e long dawn on our villages, wherein we may read t good counsel of old Thomas Tusser without a su picion of mockery:

" What good to get riches by breaking of sleep,
But, having the same, a good household to keep,
Not only to bring a good fame to thy door,
But also the prayer to win of the poor? . . .

" At Christmas by labour is little to get
Which, wanting, the poorest in danger are set:
What season so fitting in all the whole year
Thy needy poor neighbours to comfort and cheer?

" At Christmas be merry, and thankful withal,
And feast thy poor neighbours, the great with the small.
Get Holly and Ivy to trim up the house,
And take thee good brawn for to seethe and to souse:

" Provide us good cheer, for thou knowst the old guise;
Old customs that good be let no man despise.
Yea, all the year round to the poor let us give,
God's blessing to follow, by which we do live."

There we have the genuine spirit of Christmas; t spirit that Dickens so delightfully embodies in h inimitable story of *A Christmas Carol* that some cyni would have us believe him to have been the invent of Christmas. We are not sufficiently up to date accept this view of the matter; but indisputably t magician who conjured up Marley's ghost has giv to the spirit of Christmas a literary setting such none of the old minstrels ever excelled; and just

oportion as this is realized we shall see the shrivelled art of Scrooge expanding with its genial warmth, the ost of Marley effectually laid, and Bob Cratchit be- nning to feel that he is not left outside the Brother- od of Humanity. And so we conclude with Tiny m's benediction:

" God bless us, Every One ".

APPENDIX

ADDENDA AND CORRIGENDA

ıge 11, lines 11 and following.

In May 1923 the reformed calendar was adopted by the eek and other Eastern Churches, whose celebration of ristmas now, therefore, coincides with that of the Western urch.

ıge 65.

The Advent Antiphons altogether number about a dozen, h of which addresses Our Lord by a distinct title, such as Wisdom", "Orient", "Key of David", &c. No Breviary ludes them all; but usually seven are selected for use on the en days preceding Christmas Eve. A relic of the old usage mains in the Prayer Book Calendar, in which "O Sapientia" set against December 16.

ıge 133.

Snap-dragon can be traced back to the early part of the th century. There was a rustic variant of the game popular the West of England, called Flap-dragon. A lighted candle s set upright in a can of ale or cider, and the problem was drink the liquor without extinguishing the light.

ıge 135.

A domestic variant of Mumming or Masking appears in *Acted Charade*, which is said to have been imported from ance early in the 18th century.

Page 195.

The central features of the Epiphany festival at Palma Mallorca, in the Balearic Islands, are the universal purchase the Eve of the Festa of gifts for "The Babe", and the Proc sion of the Three Kings on the day itself. The cavalca includes not only the municipal guard and the officers of t local cavalry and artillery regiments, but a horseman carryi a symbolic Star; three heralds in crimson with silver morio and three groups of "Saracens" who carry respectively casket of gold, a gilded flagon of frankincense, and a soml coffer for the myrrh, appropriate to the Three Kings. The attired in all the exaggerated finery of the old miracle playe from time to time order a distribution of gifts among t crowd.

On reaching the Town-hall the Master of Ceremoni gravely places on the table of the Alcalde a packet of swe "for the children of his Honour", and the procession mo on to make similar offerings to other local dignitaries.

INDEX

Abbot of Unreason, 138.
Abelard, 38.
Advent, 65.
— images, 67.
Africa, savage customs in, 96.
Aguillanneuf and "Aguinaldo", 186.
Ale posset, 121.
Alsace, customs in, 147.
Altar-penny, 166–7.
Ambrose, 37.
Angel, Christmas, 170.
— and shepherds, 52.
Antioch, Roman date adopted, 6, and note.
Apostolic Constitutions, The, 6.
Apprentices, 133, 158, 177.
Ara Coeli, 78, 86.
Ashen faggot, 112–3.
Ashes of the Yule log, 113.
Ass, Feast of the, 200.
Asses, immunity of, 30.
Auguries, 28.
Augustus Cæsar, 3, 4.
— — fabled vision of, 87.
Augustine of Canterbury, 12.
Aurelian, Emperor, 8.
Australia, Christmas in, 170.
Austria, customs in, 151, 176, 184.
Awdlay (blind monk), 58.

Babuska, 146.
Bacchus, 14.
Backsheesh, 159.
Balder, 23.
Bambino, 82, 87.
Bavaria, custom in, 178.
Bay, 18.
Bean, king chosen by, 199.
Beauvais, custom at, 200.
Becket, St. Thomas, 180.
Bees, 165.
Befana, 195.
Bellman's verses, 159–60.
Bells, 68 ff.
Ben Jonson, 40, 134.
Bernard, St., 38.
Besançon, 72, note.
Bessy, 204.
Bethlehem, 73, 80.
Bible, divination by the, 188.
Bills of Fare, Christmas, 120, 125.
Birthday of Christ unknown, 2, 3.
— of the sun-god, 7, 9.
Boar's Head, 117–8, 128–30.
— — at Hornchurch, 129.
— — at Oxford, 129.
— — carol, 118, and note.
Bohemia, customs in, 80, 146, 170.
Boniface, St., 150–1.
Bon Jésus, Le, 148.
Book of Sports, 88.
Boxing Day, 158 ff., 175.
Boy bishop, 84–6.
Bride or Bridget, St., 208.
Brising, necklace, 1, 23.
Briton, John, 197.
Brittany, customs in, 57, 72, 106.
Brough, holly bush at, 196.
Brüd, 208.
Brumalia, 7.
Bush Inn, Bristol, 125.
Bustard, 119.
Byana's Sunday, 173.

Cakes, Christmas, 104–5.
— Baddeley's, 198.

Cakes, Twelfth-Day, 198.
Calabrian shepherds, 66.
Calendar, reformed, 10, 11.
Candlemas, 204 ff.
— bleeze, 208.
— Eve, 27.
— play, 59, 77.
Candles, blessing of, 206.
— Christmas, 114, 116.
— procession with, 206.
Candlesticks, notable, 114.
Cards, Christmas, 161–2.
— — forbidden, 133.
Carey, Henry, quoted, 158.
Carinthia, customs in, 151, 178.
Carminow, John, 124.
Carnal and Crane, 55.
Carols, defined, 41, and note.
— collected by Hone, 60.
— French, 46–7.
— German, 47.
— Italian, 45.
— Latin, 48.
— legendary, 54.
— macaronic, 48.
— mystical, 57–9.
— numeral, 57.
— old English, 49.
— origin of, 44.
— psalms as, 91.
— revival of, 61.
— satirical, 57.
— Spanish, 47.
— sung at Court, 62.
— — from church tower, 64.
— — in church, 62.
— use of, 61–2.
— Welsh, 63, and note.
Cattle, feasting of, 149–50.
— kneeling at Christmas, 165.
— visiting on Christmas Eve, 166.
— wassailing, 102.
Census, 3, 6.
Ceres and Proserpine, 205.
Chapel Royal, offering in, 192.
Characters, Twelfth Night, 197.
Charm, a forgotten, 172–4.
Chaucer quoted, 41–2.
Cherry Tree carol, 54–5.
Chester Nativity Play, 76.
Childermas, 179.
Children, festival of, 84.
— preaching, 87.
— procession of, 180.
Christ-Child, mystical presence of 25.
Christ-kind, 147.
Christmas angel, 170.
— bells, 67–70.
— bonfire, 113, 184.
— boxes, 157–8.
— cakes, 105.
— candles, 114–6.
— cards, 161–2.
— carols, 41 ff.
— crackers, 108.
— crib, 78.
— date, when fixed, 6, 7, and note.
— dew, 105.
— early traditions, 5.
— fare, 119.
— fast ordered on, 91.
— feast, 117 ff.
— fire, 109.
— gambols, 133.
— ghosts, 28.
— gifts, 144 ff.
— hymns, ancient, 37 ff.
— — modern, 60 ff.
— in Australia, 170.
— in New Zealand, 69.
— in Shetland, 170 ff.
— king of, 138.
— letting in of, 108.
— literature of, 35, 116.
— log, 108 ff.
— market on, 91.
— masque of, 134.
— music, 35.
— names of, 11, 12.
— observance forbidden, 92.
— Old, 192.
— origin of, 2.
— pantomimes, 177.
— pieces in schools, 162.
— pies, 107, 122–3.
— prince, 138.
— Puritan hostility to, 88–93.
— rural rather than urban, 209.
— sheaf, 149.

Christmas ship, 155.
— sports, 131.
— superstitions, various, 165.
— suppressed in Scotland, 89.
— tales, 32 ff.
— tree, 157 ff.
— — abuse of, 155.
— — first in England, 153.
— — folk-tale of, 151.
— — lighting service, 154–5.
— — municipal, 154.
— twelve days, 27–8, 175.
Christmas Eve, 36.
— — at Rome, 166.
— — Gaelic, 182.
— — in Holland, 66.
— — in Mexico, 82.
— — (Old), 165.
Churches, decking of, 13.
Circumcision, Feast of, 183.
Clement of Alexandria, 5.
Cleobury Mortimer, custom at, 78.
Coal substitute for Yule log, 111.
Conduits garnished, 25–6.
Conjunction of planets, 3, 4.
Constantine, donation of, 181.
Constitutions, The Apostolic, 6.
Corning, 97.
Cornish pies, 123.
Cornwall, customs in, 190.
Coronation deferred, 179.
Cosins, Bishop John, 207.
Cosmas, St., his hymn, 39.
Court masque, 134.
Coventry Nativity Play, 76.
Coxe, A. C., quoted, 19–20.
Cradle (supposed) of our Lord, 72.
Cradle-rocking, 81.
Crib, Christmas, 78.
Cricket, lucky, 168.
Croatia, customs in, 110.
Crondall, custom at, 64.
Curfew not rung at Christmas, 113.
Cypress, 19.

Daft Days, 182.
Dalmatia, customs in, 110.
Dance of Fools, 97, 124.
Dancing, 133.
— in church, 72, and note, 136.
" Dancing Day " carol, 59.
Date of Christ's birth unknown, 3, 4.
Day of week on which Christmas falls, 167.
Decking of houses, &c., 13.
— forbidden in Spain, 14.
— objections to, 13.
— reasons for, 13.
Dedication, Feast of, 9, 114.
Deer, kneeling, 165.
Denmark, customs in, 29, 99, 105, 152.
Derbyshire, custom in, 24.
Devil Doubt, 96.
Devil killed by an idiot, 99.
Devil's Dandy Dogs, 28.
Devil's Knell, 2, 68–9.
Devon, customs in, 95, 190.
Dewsbury, custom at, 68–9.
Dickens quoted, 163, 210.
Dies Natalis Solis, 7.
Distaff's Day (St.), 203.
Divination, 28, 167, 185, 188.
Dolls, Feast of, 7.
Dough rising without leaven, 195.
Drinking customs, 10, 112–3, 178, 208.
Droluns, 132.
Druidical notions, 20–2.
Dyzemas, 179.

Earendel, 195.
Egyptians, 48.
Epilogue, 209.
Epiphany, 6.
— dramatic presentation of, 193–4.
— fires, 196.
Eve, Christmas, 67, 72 ff.
— — fast in Roman Church, 105–6.
— New Year's (Celtic), 28.
Evelyn's *Diary* quoted, 92.
Evergreens, 12 ff.
— time of placing, 25.
— — of removing, 27.
Exeter, custom at, 62.
Faggot, ashen, 112–3.
Family reunions, 163.
Fast on Christmas Day, 91.
— — Eve, 105–6.
Fasts in Advent, 66.

" Father Christmas ", 146.
Feast, Christmas, 117 ff.
— pigs, 159.
Feasts, coincident, 9.
— profusion at, 119–20.
— subsidiary, 175 ff.
" Figgy Pudding ", 122.
Finland, 64, 115, 152.
Fir, 19.
Fire, the Christmas, 108.
Fires on Twelfth Night, 196–7.
First-footing, 167, 187.
Fish locally deemed seasonable, 106.
Flat foot, unlucky, 167.
Folkstone, custom at, 106.
Follet, Le, 30.
Fool-plough, 204.
Fools, Dance of, 97, 104, 124.
— Feast of, 200.
Football, 90, 130.
Fortunatus, Venantius, 38.
France, customs in, 57, 81.
— superstitions in, 29 ff.
Francis, St., 44, 78, 125, 149.
Freyja, 23.
Friars, 44.
Friesland, custom in, 18.
Frumenty, 121.
Fumigations, 184–5.

Gabriel's Hounds, 28.
Gambling at Christmas, 133.
Games, Christmas, 133.
Gay quoted, 26.
Genealogy chanted, 73.
Genethlia, 11.
Gentleman's Magazine, 187, 207.
German carols, 47.
— customs, 45, 52, 88, 100, 102–3, 122, 128.
Ghosts, Christmas, 28.
— feast for, 29.
Ghost stories, 32.
Giacomo, 45.
Gifts, Christmas, 144 ff.
Gift-books, 160.
Gilbert Davies quoted, 62.
Gipsies, 47–8.
Gladman, John, 140.
Glasgow, punishment for keeping Christmas, 89.
Glastonbury Thorn, 168–9.
Glee parties, 65.
Gloria in excelsis, 65.
Gloucestershire, customs in, 71, 74, 135–6.
Goblins, 16, 28.
Godly ballads, 59, 60.
Godston, custom at, 84.
Golden Age, memorial of, 8.
Golden Bough of Virgil, 20.
Goldsmith, 131, 160.
Gooding, 97.
Goody Twoshoes, 160.
Googe, Barnaby. See *Kirchmeyer*.
Goose pies, 176.
Great O's, the seven, 65.
Greece, customs and superstitions in, 11, 31, 185.
Greek Christmas hymn, 39.
Gregory I, Pope, 12.
— XIII, Pope, 10.
Grey folk, 172.
Grindal, Archbishop, 136–7.
Guisards, 94.
— rhymes of, 186–7.

Habergaiss, 99.
Hagmena, 185–7.
Hakon, King, 10.
Hallowe'en, 28.
Handbells, 70.
Hansel Monday, 188.
Hans Trapp, 147.
Hanuca, 9.
Haus-Christ, 147.
Heimskringla, 10.
Helga's Night, 172.
Henry VIII, song ascribed to, 17.
Herefordshire, customs in, 71, 135–6.
Herod, death of, 3.
— in Nativity Play, 76.
Herrick quoted, 27, 107–8, 189, 209.
Hickman. See *Gladman*.
Histriomastix, 90.
Hobby-horse, 95.
Hobgoblins, 29.
Hodening, 97–8.
Hœder, 22, 136.

Hogmanay, 185–7.
Hogs, divination by, 167.
Holland, customs in, 66.
Holly, 14 ff.
— and ivy songs, 14–5.
— bush at Brough, 196.
— He and She, 16.
— in church, 16.
Holy Well (Carol), 56–7.
Home and Household Festival, 1.
Hone, William, quoted, 60–2, 123–5, 198.
Hornchurch, custom at, 129.
Horses, customs relating to, 176.
Hostility of Puritans to Christmas, 88, 90.
Hungary, custom in, 149.
Hunt, Leigh, quoted, 164.
Hunt, The Wild, 28.
Hunting owls, squirrels, &c., 131.
Husk, W. H., quoted, 129, 159.
Hymns, ancient Christmas, 37 ff.
— German, 41.
— Greek, 39.
— Latin, 37.
— modern, 60.
Hymn of the Ass (mock), 201.

Inn, Christmas Bill of Fare, 125.
Inner Temple, Christmas revels, 140.
Innocents, the Holy, 3.
— carol of, 54.
— day deemed unlucky, 178–9.
— — muffled peals rung, 180.
— — observance at Westminster Abbey, 180.
Inns of Court festivities, 139, 141.
Irenæus referred to, 53.
Irish customs and superstitions, 115, 132, 196.
Iron, Trows afraid of, 173.
Italian carols, 45.
— customs, 78–80.
Ivy, 15–7.
— song, 15.

Jacopone, 45.
Janus, Temple (or Gate) of, 4.
Jerusalem, Roman date accepted at, 6, 7, and note.
John's (St.) Day, 178.
Jones, Inigo, 134.
Julebuk, 99.
Julius Cæsar, 10.
Julotte, 63.
Jutland, custom in, 115.
Juvenilia, 8.

Kalendæ Januarii, 8.
Kalendar. See Calendar.
Kallikantzaroi, 31.
Kent, customs in, 97, 191.
Kindel-wiegen, 81.
" King Drinks (The)", 199.
" King of Cockneys ", 180.
King of Christmas, 140.
— mock, 7, 180.
Kings, The Three, 53; legend of, 192.
— — day of their observance forbidden in France, 193.
— — passing by, 195.
Kirchmeyer quoted, 66, 73, 176, 199.
Kissing-bush, 21, 25.
Klapperbock, 99.
Knecht, Rupert, 145.
Knut's Day (13th January), 199.
Kris Kringle, 145.

Lady Bountiful, 117.
Lambswool, 100.
Lampreys, 107.
Lamps in decoration, 13, 114.
Lancashire custom, 115.
Lapland, 63.
Laurel, 18.
Leather unlucky, 168.
Legendary carols, 54.
Lentils, not to be eaten at Christmas, 175, note.
Lights, Feast of, 9, 114.
Lithuania, divination in, 185.
Livonia, superstition in, 31.
Log, 108 ff. See *Yule log*.
Loki, 22.
Longfellow, 75.
Lord of Misrule, 135 ff.
Lord's Day, sanctity of, 88.
Lucy, St., 145–6.
— — as a bogie, 146.

Lucy, St., wife of Father Christmas, 146.
Lupercalia, 180, 205.
Luther, 47.

Mabinogion, 127.
Macaronic Carols, 48.
Madrid, custom at, 72.
" Make Room for Christmas ", 92.
Man, Isle of, customs in, 64, 161.
Manorial courts, 204.
Mari Llwyd, 98.
Market on Christmas Day, 91.
Masking at Court, 134–5.
— pre-Christian, 96.
Mass heard in mines, 169.
— midnight, 71–2.
— probable origin of word, 12.
May Queen suppressed, 141.
Mexico, customs in, 82.
Midnight services at Bethlehem, 73.
— — on New Year's Eve, 183–4.
Milton quoted, 4, 33.
Mince pies, 123, 169.
Miracle plays, 74–8.
Miscellaneous superstitions, 115.
Misrule, Lord of, 136 ff.
Mistletoe, 20 ff.
— Druidical associations, 20.
— kissing under, 21.
— on altar at York, 22, 143.
— on oak, rare, 20, 25.
— song, 23.
— substitute for, 24.
— symbolism of, 22.
Mithras, 9.
Mock king, 7, 180.
" Mock, The ", 108 note.
Moral plays, 177.
Moravian School custom, 78.
Morris dance, 95.
Mumming, 94.
Mumping, 97.
Music, Christmas, 36.
Mystical carols, 57–9.
— reiteration of divine acts, 31–2.

Nadal, 11.
Nadolig, 11.
Nailing up, 198.
Naogeorgus. See *Kirchmeyer*.
Naples, custom at, 66.
Nativity, Feast of the, 11.
— Play at Chester, 76.
— — at Coventry, 76.
— — at Rouen, 73–4.
— — at Wakefield, 75.
— — at York, 75.
— — modern, 78.
Navidad, 12.
Nazianzen, 53.
Necklace Brising, 1, 23.
Neo-Druidism, 22.
Neuwied School, 78.
New fire, 206.
— style, 11.
— water, 188.
— Year, letting in the, 188.
— Year's Eve, 188.
— — Celtic, 28.
— Zealand Christmas, 69.
Newbury, John, 160.
Nicholas, St., 144.
Noël, 11.
— personified, 148.
Noëls, carols so called, 48.
Nollaig, 11.
Normandy, customs in, 76, 138.
Northumberland, Household Book of Duke of, 119.
Norway, customs in, 63, 69, 80, 100, 103, 114.
Norwich pageant, 140.
Nowell, 11.
Numeral Carols, 57.

Oats and candles, Irish custom, 196.
Odin, 28, 98.
— his horse Sleipnor, 98, 149.
Oiel Verry, 64.
Oil of mercy, 153.
Old Oak Chest (story of), 23.
— Style, 11.
Origin of carols, 44.
— of Christmas, 2.
Oracles, belief in, 33.
— silent after Nativity, 33.
Oswestry, custom near, 115.
Owls, &c , hunting of, 131.
Ox and Ass, legend of, 30, 52.

Oxen, immunity of, 30.
Oxen, speaking, 166.
Oxford customs at, 129.

Pantomimes, 177.
Paradise open on Christmas Eve, 169.
Parfre, John, his Candlemas play, 77.
Paris, Christmas trees in, 153.
— customs at, 72.
" Pasque and Yule " abolished, 181.
Paston Letters quoted, 133, 179.
Peacock, 119.
Peckham, Archbishop, 84.
Penshurst, Christmas at, 124–5.
Pies, Christmas, 122.
— monster, 123.
Pifferaria, Calabrian, 66.
Pig customs, various, 127–8.
Pigs, divination by, 167.
Plough-lights, 203.
Plough Monday, 203.
Plum porridge, 121–2.
— pudding, 122.
Plygain, 62–3.
Poland, customs in, 29, 186.
Pomerania, customs in, 148.
Pope blessing candles, 206.
— — sword and hat, 66.
— says three Masses, 71.
Pork, esteemed by Welsh and Irish, 128.
Posada, 82–3.
Præsepio (Presepe), 78 ff.
— curious print of, 83.
Preaching of children, 87.
Presentation, Feast of, 205.
Price, Lawrence, 93.
Profusion in feasts, 119 ff.
Provence, customs in, 109.
Prudentius, 37.
Prynne, William, 90.
Purification, Feast of, 205.
Puritan hostility to Christmas, 88–90.

Queen of May suppressed, 141.
Queen's College, Oxford, 129.

Raging Host, 28.
Rastekais, 29.
Reunions, family, 163.
Richmond, Yorkshire, custom at, 97.
Ringing out the Old Year, 184.
Ripon, customs at, 18, 111, 207.
Ritson, 49.
Robin Goodfellow, 29.
— Hood and Littlejohn, 141.
— Redbreast, 95.
Rome, customs at, 66, 80.
Rosemary, 18.
Rouen, Nativity Play at, 73–4.
Roumania, customs in, 106.
Rumbald's Night, 106.
Ruminant animals kneeling, 165.
Russia, legends told in, 146.
Rutland, superstition in, 25.

Sabbath, Puritan, 88.
— Witches', 96.
Saehrimmer, the Boar, 127.
Saining of children, horses, &c., 172–4.
Salisbury, memorial of boy-bishop of, 85.
" Sally in our Alley ", 158.
Santa Claus, 145 ff.
Saturnalia, 7, 8, 124.
Schimmel, Schimmelreiter, 98.
Schools, Christmas pieces in, 162.
Scotland, customs before the Reformation in, 104, 114, 166, 182.
— Christmas abolished in, 89.
— New Year's Eve and Day in, 184.
Scott, Sir Walter, quoted, 70, 141, note.
Sedulius, 38.
Seeing spirits, 169.
Selden, John, 6.
Serbia, customs in, 11, 110, 126.
Seville, dancing in church, 72, note.
Shakespeare quoted, 32, 100.
Sheaf, Christmas, 149.
Shepherds, Calabrian, 66.
— carol of, 52.
— in Nativity plays, 75.
Shetland, customs in, 170 ff.
Ship, Christmas, 155.
Shoe, receptacle of gifts, 195.
Sicily, customs in, 81.
Sigillaria, 7.
Silesia, custom in, 103.

Sintram, story of, 128.
Sirloin, fable of, 120.
Sir Roger de Coverley, 117, 122.
Sleipnor, Odin's horse, 98, 103.
Snap-dragon, 133.
Solemn League and Covenant, 90.
Somerset, customs in, 95, 188 ff.
Southern Cross, Christmas under, 70.
Sovereign Prince, scripture read by, 66.
Spain, customs in, 72, 193, 195, 206.
— decking with evergreens fobidden, 14.
Spectator quoted, 26, 122.
Spenser quoted, 42.
Sports, Book of, 88.
Sports, Christmas, 130.
Squirrels, hunting, 130.
SS. Simeon and Anne, 205.
Stabat Mater Speciosa, 45.
Staffordshire, custom in, 103.
Standard tree, 151.
— wrecked in storm, 26.
Star-bearer, 66.
Star-man in Poland, 106.
Star of Bethlehem, 2, 3.
Stephen, St., legend of, 132.
— — patron of horses, 176.
Stephen's, St., Day, 175.
Stocking, Christmas, 145.
Stow, John, 25, 135.
Straw, sleeping in, 29, 164.
Strenæ, 8.
Stubbs, J., Puritan, 137.
Styria, customs in, 178.
Sun-god, birthday of, 7, 8.
Sun-wheel, cakes resembling, 173.
Superstitions, various, 165.
Swan, 119.
Sweden, customs in, 29, 99, 105, 127, 146, 153, 176, 199.
Swine, generally disesteemed, 128.
— sacrifices to Frey, 128.
Switzerland, customs in, 86, 146, 195.
Sword dance, 94.
Sylvester, St., 181.

Tales, Christmas, 31.
Tate, Nahum, 60.
Tatler, The, quoted, 36.
Tauler, John, quoted, 156.
Taxing. See *Census*.
Te Deum not sung in Advent, 65.
Telesphorus, Bishop, 55.
" Tenebræ " inverted, 155.
Tertullian referred to, 13, 114.
Thamas-mass, 172.
Thanksgiving Day in New England 90.
Thomas, St., of Canterbury, 180.
Thomas of Celano, 45.
Thomasing, 97.
Tiberius Cæsar, 3.
Tom-tit, 131, 190.
Tree, Christmas, 150 ff.
— — abuse of, 155.
— — municipal, 154.
— -lighting service, 154.
— of Gold, 151.
— of Life, legend of, 153.
— standard, 151.
Trees, bowing at Christmas, 166.
— — at Epiphany, 195.
— wassailing, 189.
Trolls or Trows, 172.
— — afraid of iron, 173.
— — fond of dancing, 174.
" Truelove to the Dance ", 59.
Tulya's E'en, 172.
Turkey, 119.
Tusser quoted, 210.
Twelfth Day, 196.
— — cakes, 198.
— — Old Style, 174.
— Night, 196.
— — characters, 197.
— — fires, 196.
— — supper, 197.
Twelve days of Christmas, 28, 175.
Twrch Trwyth, hunting of, 127.
Tyrol, customs in, 151, 176, 178, 184.

Unlucky days, 178–9.
" Unthrifty Folk ", 142.

Valkyries, 28.
Vampires, 31.
Venantius Fortunatus, 38.
Visiting the Holy Family, 80–1.

Waits, 36.
Wakefield Plays, 75–6.
Wales, customs in, 62, 106, 127, 130.
Walpurgis-Nacht, 96.
Wassail bowl, 99.
— songs, 102–4.
Wassailing, 90 ff.
— cattle, 102.
— fruit trees, 189.
Watch-night, 36, 183–4.
Webster quoted, 131.
Weihnacht, 12.
Wein-nacht, 12.
Wenceslas, King, 176.
Werewolves, 29, 31, 169.
Wessel-cup, 103.
Westminster Abbey, 180.
Westminster Hall feast, 120.
Whipcol, 173.
Whipping customs, 179.
Whitstable, custom at, 106.
Wild Hunt, The, 28.
Winifred of Crediton, 150.
Wisdom, Book of, quoted, 71.
Wise Men from the East, 3, 53.
Witches and Warlocks, 29.
— — active in Advent, 66.
Witches' Sabbath, 96.
Wither, George, quoted, 40, 158.
Withy carol, 56.
Wood spirits, 13, 25.
Woodward, Hezekiah, 92.
Wren, hunting the, 131.
Wren-boys, 132.

Yew, 19.
Yggdrassil, The Ash, 112.
York, invitation to "Unthrifty Folk", 142.
— dancing in church at, 72, note.
— mistletoe on the altar at, 22, 143.
— Nativity Play, 75.
Yorkshire, customs in, 95, 137, 176.
Yule Baby, 67, 103.
— dow, 105.
— firth, 142.
— -Klapp, 148.
— log, 108 ff; customs and superstitions relating to, 108–11.
— — ashes of, 113.
— — coal as substitute for, 111.
" Yule ! ", shouting, 137.
— straw, 164, note.
Yule, " Yules ", 10, 12, note.

GT 4985 C93
CRIPPEN T G THOMAS GEORGE
CHRISTMAS AND CHRISTMAS LORE

40869826 CURR

000027270230

13 A60544